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India's aspirations no longer limited to its borders: Modi

Addressing the Indian diaspora, the PM said India is going through a phase of unprecedented transformation, terming the country the 'land of opportunities'

THE HAGUE

Describing India as a "land of opportunities", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the country is undergoing an "unprecedented transformation" and its aspirations are "no longer limited to its borders".

Addressing the Indian community in The Hague, the Prime Minister also said that India is dreaming big and its youth aspires to reach the sky.

"India of the 21st century is a land of opportunities. India is both technology-driven and humanity-driven. India is becoming as modern as it is ancient. Therefore, this is also the time to connect with your ancestral villages in India, and to participate in the journey of developed India," Modi said in his over 40-minute speech.

He urged all "friends of India" in the Netherlands to increase cooperation with India as much as possible. "This will also increase India's potential, and the return on your investments will also be higher. This is Modi's guarantee," he said, amid applause from the audience.

"Today, our India is dreaming big. Today, the country is saying - we don't just want transformation, we want the best. And we don't just want the best, we want the fastest. And that's why when aspirations are unlimited in India, efforts are also becoming limitless," he said.

Today, our India is dreaming big. We don't just want transformation, we want the best and we want the fastest. And that's why when aspirations are unlimited in India, efforts are also becoming limitless.

—Narendra Modi, PM

'Youth of India want to touch sky now'

Modi said the youth of India want to touch the sky now, and cited that as a reason behind India's startup ecosystem getting stronger. "Now we are the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world," he added.

"India's aspirations today are no longer limited to its borders. India wants to host the Olympics, become a global manufacturing hub, emerge as a leader in green energy and become the growth engine of the world," he said.

Modi said that India is currently experiencing an "unprecedented transformation". He further said: "You must have seen recently that India hosted the world's largest and most successful AI Summit. Before that, India also successfully hosted the G20 Summit. And this was not a one-time event. This has now become the character of today's India."

'India now home to 125 active unicorns'

Recalling how India had only four unicorns in 2014, Modi on Saturday said the country now has nearly 125 active unicorns. "Today, our startups are doing remarkable work in AI, defence, and the space sector. This culture of research and innovation is becoming even more expansive," he said.

Tulips to Lotus: Modi's flower diplomacy

PM Modi while addressing the Indian diaspora in the Netherlands drew parallels to the popularity of tulips in the Netherlands and the lotus in India. Modi said, "The Netherlands is known for tulips, just as India is known for the lotus." "The tulip and the lotus remind us that whether roots lie in water or in the soil, with the right nourishment, they blossom. This is also the foundation of the partnership between India and the Netherlands." Notably, Lotus is also India's national flower. He said, "As I was entering here, I could see the spirit of the entire Maharashtra and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, my beloved Rajasthan, and friends from UP and Assam among you all." Praising the grand welcome from the Indian diaspora, he said, "Seeing so much love and enthusiasm, I forgot for a moment that I am in the Netherlands, and it felt like I was attending a festival in India."

NEET paper leak: 'Mastermind' biology lecturer caught

NEW DELHI

The CBI on Saturday arrested a biology lecturer who was part of the National Testing Agency's (NTA) paper-setting committee for NEET-UG held on May 3, officials said.

The arrest was made on the basis of questioning of alleged kingpin P V Kulkarni and other accused in the paper leak case, they said.

The biology lecturer Manisha Mandhare was arrested here after being questioned by the agency at its headquarters, they said.

She was allegedly involved in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) examination process and was appointed by the NTA as an expert, they said.

Officials said Mandhare had complete access to the Botony and Zoology question papers.

Mandhare is alleged to have mobilised prospective NEET examination candidates in April 2026 through Manisha Wagmare of Pune, who was arrested on May 14, and conducted special coaching classes for these students at her Pune residence.

It is alleged that Mandhare dictated leaked questions and responses to select students and took lakhs of rupees as fee.

Most of these questions tallied with the questions that appeared in the examination on May 3. The NEET exam was cancelled following allegations of a paper leak.

The CBI had arrested Professor P V Kulkarni, a domain expert in chemistry from Latur on Friday. Kulkarni for years served on panels involved in setting the NEET question paper.

NEET aspirant ends life

JAIPUR: A 23-year-old NEET aspirant died by suicide in Rajasthan's Sikar on Friday night, days after the cancellation of the NEET-2026 amid allegations of question paper leak. Pradeep Mahich allegedly hanged himself from a ceiling fan using his sister's scarf at his rented accommodation in Sikar's Jaldhari Nagar area on Piprali Road. Originally from a village in Jhunjhunu district, Pradeep had been preparing for NEET in Sikar for the last three years. As per family members, Pradeep was expecting over 650 marks in NEET-UG 2026, a score they believed could have got him admission to any reputed government medical college. His relatives claim he had been under severe mental trauma ever since the NTA cancelled the test following the 'paper leak'.

CBSE makes 3 languages mandatory for Class IX from July 1

NEW DELHI

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has issued a fresh notice making the study of three languages mandatory for the students of Class IX. It will come into effect from July 1, 2026.

However, there will be no Board examination for the third language (R3) in Class X, CBSE clarified. "To keep the focus on learning and reduce any undue pressure on students, no Board Examination shall be conducted for R3 at the Class X level," reads the circular.

The official circular issued by the Board, on May 15, declared that at least two of the three languages must be native Indian languages, and in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023.

"With effect from 1st July 2026, for Class IX, the study of three languages (R1, R2, R3) shall be compulsory, with at least two languages being native Indian languages," the circular stated.

K'taka gets 1,122 additional govt medical seats: Patil

BENGALURU

Karnataka Minister Sharan Prakash Patil on Saturday announced that the state has been allocated an additional 1,122 medical seats, offering a golden opportunity for aspiring healthcare professionals.

Addressing a press conference held at Vidhana Soudha here, Patil, who is the Minister for Medical Education, said Karnataka remains at the forefront in the field of medical education in the country, and the additional seats allocated to the state will benefit districts including Koppal, Gadag, Chamarajanagar, Karwar, Kaveri, and others.

For undergraduate seats, a central government grant of Rs 495 crore will be received. Similarly, a grant of Rs 541 crore will be provided for postgraduate medical seats, he said.

According to him, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare gave its final approval on May 15. In total, the state will receive Rs 1,090 crore.

Allocation of over 1,000 medical seats to a single state is a record achievement and stands as a testament to Karnataka's accomplishments, said Patil. "Karnataka now offers abundant opportunities for those wishing to excel in the medical field, and students should make the best use of this," the Minister added.

> Allocation of over 1,000 medical seats to a single state is a record achievement and stands as a testament to Karnataka's accomplishments.
>
> **Sharan Prakash Patil, Minister for Medical Education**

'Karnataka's CET model is better than NEET'

The recent NEET question paper leak is a great injustice to the entire student body. The Centre has ruined the future of thousands of students who dreamt of becoming doctors, said Medical Education Minister Sharanaprakash Patil. Addressing the media at Vikas Soudha on Saturday, he said the failure of the Centre is evident in this case. "Instead of NEET, the Common Entrance Test (CET) in Karnataka is a better model. It would be better if it was adopted. We have appealed to the Centre several times, but there was no response," he said. Every year, there are confusions during NEET, he said, adding that a court-ordered probe should be conducted into the paper leak.

My fight for Bidadi farmers starts today: Gowda

BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, who expressed his anger that farmers' land is being snatched away in the name of Bidadi Township and is going to run a scam, announced that he would plunge into the fight against this scam.

Addressing the media at the JD(S) state office here on Saturday, he said the government is out to grab farmers' land and run a scam.

"Some people would joke that Deve Gowda used to cry in the meeting earlier. But I am laughing at this system. The current Chief Minister, Siddaramaiah, is my friend and old colleague. We have worked together. But it pains me that no one sees what is happening here," the former PM said.

"Siddaramaiah, you have worked with me. I am also aware of your talk of social justice. I have already written a letter asking you to investigate in whose name about 20,000 acres of land around Bengaluru is. Siddaramaiah, you are not listening to the problems of the people, succumbing to the pressure of those who are responsible for Bengaluru city. Has anyone gone and listened to the problems of the homeless farmers? Deve Gowda questioned.

Close shave for passengers as moving bus catches fire

HASSAN

A private bus caught fire and was completely gutted after one of its tyres burst while it was moving, near Shantigrama in Hassan taluk early on Saturday. The passengers on board had a narrow escape.

The private bus (KA-01-B-3164), was on its way from Mangaluru to Bengaluru with 36 passengers, including men, women, and children. Near Shantigrama, a tyre of the bus burst, and a fire broke out in the bus immediately after. The driver promptly stopped the bus on the road, and all passengers got off as soon as it halted.

The fire soon engulfed the entire bus, and the private bus was completely charred. Passengers got down in panic, and several of them lost their mobile phones and luggage to the fire. It is suspected that the bus tyre burst and caught fire due to overspeeding.

The passengers continued their journey in another bus. Fire brigade personnel arrived at the spot and extinguished the fire, but by then the bus had been completely burned.

The Shantigrama police visited the spot.

PAY HIKE, ARREARS

K'taka bus strike looms from May 20

BENGALURU

The tussle between the government and Joint Action Committee of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporations' labour unions is continuing even after salaries were revised by 12.5%.

The employees have rejected the wage revision announced by the government, and the Joint Action Committee of State Road Transport Corporations' labour unions has called for an indefinite bus strike starting May 20.

Reacting to this, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said, "We will pay the arrears of 26 months, and we will revise wages by 12.5%, this is our government's stand. We have communicated this to the transport employees".

Responding to the transport employees' strike issue on the day of the Sadhanā in Tumakuru, he said, "I will speak when the time and situation arise. Earlier, wage revisions used to happen once every four years. The wage revision was due in 2020, but it didn't happen then because of Covid".

"On April 1, 2023, when Basavaraj Bommai was CM, a 15% wage revision was done. Along with that, transport employees have demanded that it must happen every four years. This has been discussed many times. The previous government also gave a lot despite Covid hardships — we cannot deny that", he said.

'No proposal to hike fares'

Meanwhile, Reddy clarified that there is no proposal to increase fares of government buses.

IN-SHORT

- Unions reject 12.5% wage revision, demands 25%.
- Unions insist that 25% wage revision should be effective from 1-1-2024
- Plan to disrupt the government's Sadhanā
- Night halt buses not to operate on May 19 itself
- Unions call for indefinite strike by halting buses from May 20
- Currently, the government has increased wages by 12.5% from 2025
- Decision to continue indefinite strike until the government calls for talks again.

Cong gears up for Sadhana Samavesha on May 20

BENGALURU

The ruling Congress government led by CM Siddaramaiah, is preparing for a massive 'Sadhana Samavesha' in Tumakuru on May 20 to mark completion of three years in office.

The government has reportedly begun large-scale preparations for the event, which is expected to witness participation of more than two lakh people. The event is being planned as a major political and administrative showcase highlighting the government's achievements over the last three years. Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda recently inspected the venue and reviewed arrangements.

BJP backs, Cong opposes 'ONOE'

BENGALURU

While the BJP strongly supported the implementation of the 'One Nation, One Election' initiative, the Congress vehemently opposed the proposal during a discussion meeting convened by the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the Lok Sabha Secretariat in Bengaluru on Saturday.

The committee visited the Taj West End hotel and held consultations with political parties regarding the proposed constitutional amendment related to simultaneous elections. The Karnataka unit of the BJP submitted a memorandum urging the implementation of simultaneous elections across the country.

State BJP President and MLA BY Vijayendra and other senior party leaders participated in the discussions. Among those present were MPs P. C. Mohan, Yaduveer Wadiyar and CN Manjunath; MLAs L Ravi Subramanya, Suresh Gowda and Jyothi Ganesh; MLC KS Naveen; BJP state general secretary Nandeesh Reddy; and state chief spokesperson Ashwath Narayan.

One Nation, One Election aims to weaken federal structure: DKS

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar strongly opposed the Central government's proposed 'One Nation, One Election', terming it a politically motivated move aimed at centralising power and weakening the federal structure. Expressing his views during the dialogue, he said the proposal posed a threat to the democratic system and was being designed for the convenience of those in power at the Centre. He pointed out that the Karnataka Legislative Assembly had already passed a resolution opposing the concept.

QUICK READ

Early monsoon set to bring summer relief

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The India Meteorological Department has brought relief to people across Karnataka by forecasting the early arrival of the southwest monsoon this year. According to the latest weather prediction, the monsoon is expected to reach the Kerala coast on May 26, nearly six days ahead of the normal schedule, and is likely to enter Karnataka around the same time. The development comes amid intense summer heat conditions experienced across several parts of the state in recent weeks. Meteorological officials said favourable atmospheric conditions over the Andaman Sea and the southern Bay of Bengal have accelerated the progress of the southwest monsoon. Normally, the monsoon reaches India around June 1, but this year weather systems appear to be supporting an earlier onset.

Human remains discovery sparks panic near Sarjapur

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Human skeletal remains, including a skull and bones, were discovered near Mugaluru Lake close to Sarjapur in Anekal taluk of Bengaluru district, creating panic among local residents. The remains were reportedly spotted by shepherds grazing cattle in the area, following which the police were alerted. Authorities have launched an investigation to identify the deceased and determine the circumstances surrounding the death. According to police sources, the incident came to light when local shepherds noticed skeletal remains lying in the open area near Mugaluru Lake. Alarmed by the discovery, they immediately informed the Sarjapur police station about the matter. Soon after receiving the information, police personnel rushed to the spot along with senior officers to inspect the area.

Reported hijab move sparks fresh public debate

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The Karnataka government's reported decision to allow girls to wear hijab in schools has triggered reactions from members of the public, with several residents expressing support for the move. In Bengaluru, some citizens stated that the decision would help students feel more comfortable and secure while attending educational institutions. The issue of wearing hijab in educational institutions has remained a widely discussed social and political topic in Karnataka over the past few years.

Two-hour metro disruption scheduled for today morning

Metro rail services on Bengaluru's Purple Line will face partial disruption for two hours on May 17 owing to technical maintenance and urgent safety-related works, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) announced.

BENGALURU

The temporary interruption will affect train operations between Hosahalli and Cubbon Park stations from 7 am to 9 am. Authorities said that metro services on other sections of the Purple Line, as well as the Green and Yellow Lines, will continue to function normally during the maintenance period.According to a statement issued by BMRCL, emergency and essential safety works will be undertaken between Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Station, Majestic, and Sir M. Visvesvaraya Station, Central College. The corporation stated that the technical maintenance activities are necessary to ensure safe and efficient metro operations on the network.Due to the scheduled works, train services between Sri Balagangadharanatha Swamiji Station, also known as Hosahalli, and Cubbon Park Metro Station will remain partially disrupted for two hours in the morning. Commuters travelling on this stretch have been advised to plan their journeys in advance and consider alternative transport arrangements during the affected period. BMRCL clarified that regular metro operations on the disrupted section will resume after 9 am on May 17. The corporation also assured passengers that the remaining stretches of the Purple Line will continue to operate as per the normal timetable despite the temporary interruption.

Train services from Challaghatta to Vijayanagar and from M. G. Road to Whitefield (Kadugodi) stations will function according to the usual schedule without any changes. In addition, the Green Line services between Madavara and Silk Institute stations will remain unaffected throughout the day.The recently introduced Yellow Line corridor between R. V. Road and Bommasandra will also continue regular operations without any disruption, BMRCL said in its notification.Metro authorities urged passengers to stay updated through official announcements and station displays for any additional travel advisories. The maintenance exercise is part of ongoing efforts to improve commuter safety and maintain operational reliability across the Bengaluru Metro network.

Bengaluru airport records strong FY26 growth

Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru has achieved another major milestone in passenger and cargo movement during the 2025-26 financial year. The airport handled more than 44 million passengers and transported over 532,000 metric tonnes of cargo, reinforcing its position as one of India's busiest and fastest-growing aviation hubs.

BENGALURU

According to an official statement released after the board meeting, Kempegowda International Airport registered strong growth in both domestic and international operations during the 2025-26 financial year. The airport recorded a total passenger movement of 44.47 million, reflecting a substantial increase driven by rising domestic travel demand and a sharp rise in international passenger traffic.

The airport also handled approximately 532,000 metric tonnes of cargo during the same period, underlining Bengaluru's growing importance as a logistics and trade hub in the country. Airport authorities said the increase in cargo movement was supported by strong demand from sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, e-commerce, and perishable goods transportation.

The performance review meeting examined the airport's operational highlights, infrastructure development initiatives, and future expansion plans. Officials noted that the sustained growth in passenger traffic and cargo operations demonstrates the airport's strategic role in strengthening India's aviation and logistics sectors.

BIAL stated that the continued increase in international travel has been one of the major contributors to the airport's overall growth. Improved connectivity to global destinations, expansion of airline operations, and increasing business and tourism travel from Bengaluru have significantly boosted passenger numbers over the past year.Domestic travel demand also remained stable throughout the financial year, with the airport witnessing high passenger movement across major metropolitan cities and regional destinations. Officials attributed this growth to increasing air travel preferences, improved connectivity, and the expansion of airline services from Bengaluru.

Airport authorities further highlighted several development initiatives aimed at enhancing passenger experience, improving operational efficiency, and expanding cargo handling capabilities. The review meeting also discussed long-term infrastructure planning to accommodate future growth in air traffic and cargo demand.

Kempegowda International Airport has consistently emerged as one of India's leading airports in terms of operational performance and passenger convenience. The latest figures reflect Bengaluru's growing status as a major economic, technological, and international travel center in the country.Officials said the airport will continue focusing on capacity expansion, sustainability measures, and technology-driven improvements to support increasing passenger and cargo traffic in the coming years.

The wage revision dispute between the Karnataka government and state transport employees has intensified further, with transport workers' unions officially preparing for an indefinite bus strike from May 20.

BUS SERVICES FACING STATE-WIDE SHUTDOWN THREAT

BENGALURU

The employees have rejected the government's latest proposal of a 12.5 percent salary hike and continue to demand a 25 percent wage increase with retrospective effect from January 2024. Adding pressure on the government, transport workers have also announced a protest during the state government's three-year achievement convention scheduled to be held in Tumakuru on May 19.

The ongoing conflict between the Karnataka government and transport employees has emerged as a major challenge for the administration, especially with the possibility of widespread disruption to public transport services across the state. Transport employees have been demanding a significant revision in salaries for several weeks and have accused the government of failing to address their concerns adequately.

Initially, the state government had proposed a 7 percent salary increase in an attempt to resolve the dispute. However, transport employees rejected the offer, insisting that it did not meet their long-pending demands. Subsequent negotiations conducted by the Transport Minister also failed to produce a breakthrough.The matter later reached the Chief Minister's office, following which the government announced a revised order granting a 12.5 percent wage increase applicable from March 2025. Despite this revised offer, transport unions firmly rejected the proposal, maintaining that employees deserve a 25 percent salary hike effective from January 2024.In a further escalation of the protest, transport workers have planned demonstrations during the government's Sadhana Samavesha event in Tumakuru on May 19, which marks the completion of three years of the current administration. Hundreds of drivers and conductors are expected to gather near the Tumakuru Town Hall wearing black clothes as a mark of protest against the government's stand on wage revision.

Although the indefinite strike is officially scheduled to begin on May 20, transport employees have warned that bus services across Karnataka could begin shutting down from the night of May 19 itself. This has raised concerns over severe inconvenience to daily commuters, office workers, and passengers dependent on state-run transport services.Meanwhile, the government is reportedly considering invoking the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) to prevent disruption to public transport operations. However, union leaders have declared that they will not withdraw the protest even if ESMA is enforced. Employee representatives have stated that the agitation will continue until their demands are fully met, setting the stage for a major confrontation between the government and transport workers in the coming days.

Karnataka orders registration of school lands

BENGALURU

The Karnataka Revenue Department has initiated a major administrative exercise to protect land used by thousands of government schools and colleges across the state. The department has directed that lands occupied and used by government educational institutions must be officially recorded in revenue documents, including pahani and Record of Rights (RTC) registers, in the names of the respective institutions. In an important move aimed at safeguarding public educational properties, the Revenue Commissionerate has issued an official circular containing urgent and mandatory instructions to Deputy Commissioners of all districts in Karnataka. The order seeks immediate action to ensure that lands currently being used by government schools and colleges are formally entered into official land records.The issue had remained unresolved for several years despite the continuous functioning of many educational institutions on such lands. The problem gained widespread public attention after investigative media reports revealed that thousands of government schools lacked proper land documentation in revenue records.

Governor appoints Dr. Ramya to Maharani Cluster University Syndicate

BENGALURU

Dr. A. Ramya Ramesh, the Chief Executive Officer of the HMR Group of Institutions, has been appointed as a syndicate member of Bengaluru's prestigious Maharani Cluster University. The official order was issued by the Governor of Karnataka, who serves as the Chancellor of the university. According to the Governor's Secretariat, her three-year tenure will formally commence on July 7, marking a significant addition to the university's leadership. Dr. Ramya is widely recognized for her dual excellence in educational administration and impactful social service. Her philanthropic work heavily focuses on women's empowerment, healthcare, and promoting education for underprivileged children. Notably, she has spearheaded initiatives to adopt government schools, providing them with essential infrastructure and land sites, particularly in the Hennur area.Academics and community leaders have warmly welcomed her nomination. There is widespread confidence that her rich administrative experience and dedication to social welfare will immensely benefit Maharani Cluster University's future development and academic governance.

MLA G.T. Devegowda meets JD(S) Supremo Deve Gowda

BENGALURU

Speculation surrounding the political future of Karnataka MLA G. T. Devegowda appears to have ended after he met Janata Dal (Secular) supremo and former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda in Bengaluru. Following the meeting, the senior leader clarified that he would contest the 2028 Assembly elections from the Chamundeshwari constituency on a JD(S) ticket, dismissing rumours about his possible shift towards the Congress party.

The meeting between the two leaders attracted considerable political attention as G.T. Devegowda had been maintaining distance from party activities for several months. Political observers had speculated about growing differences within the party, particularly after the MLA reportedly expressed displeasure over not being given the JD(S) Legislature Party leadership position.G.T. Devegowda, popularly known as GTD, had remained largely inactive in the party's organisational activities in recent months, fuelling speculation about his political intentions. His public statements praising Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had further intensified discussions about a possible rapprochement with the Congress party.The rumours gained momentum amid reports that the senior MLA was unhappy with the party leadership after being denied a prominent role within the legislative wing of JD(S). His absence from several party-related activities and events also added to the uncertainty surrounding his political future.Against this backdrop, his sudden visit to H. D. Deve Gowda's residence in Padmanabhanagar generated significant curiosity within political circles. The two leaders reportedly held discussions for some time during the meeting, marking one of their notable interactions after a prolonged period.

After the meeting, G.T. Devegowda publicly reaffirmed his respect and loyalty towards the former Prime Minister and the JD(S). He praised Deve Gowda's contributions to national politics and his longstanding commitment to farmers' welfare.

Speaking to reporters, the MLA said that Deve Gowda is a nationally respected leader whose achievements as Prime Minister continue to be acknowledged across the country. He also mentioned that even Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appreciated Deve Gowda's qualities and leadership.G.T. Devegowda stated that the former Prime Minister has always worked to carry party leaders and workers together while remaining committed to farmers and rural communities. He added that he holds immense respect for Deve Gowda and also enquired about the health of family elder Chennamma during the visit.

ITC SCAM DETECTED

Minister's transport firm named in tax fraud

BENGALURU

Officials of the Commercial Tax Department in Bengaluru have uncovered a massive fake Input Tax Credit (ITC) fraud estimated to be worth nearly Rs 2,000 crore. As part of the ongoing investigation into the large-scale tax evasion network, the department has reportedly issued a notice to National Travels, a well-known transport company linked to Karnataka minister B. Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan. Authorities suspect that vehicles belonging to the company may have been used in the alleged fraudulent operations involving fake scrap transportation and fabricated tax invoices.According to officials involved in the investigation, the fraud network allegedly operated by creating fake bills under the guise of transporting scrap materials such as iron and other recyclable goods. Investigators believe that no actual business transactions took place and that the accused generated fraudulent invoices solely to claim illegal tax benefits through fake Input Tax Credit claims.

The Commercial Tax Department stated that the scam involved the circulation of fake invoices and fabricated e-way bills to create the appearance of legitimate commercial transactions. Authorities suspect that vehicles belonging to National Travels were allegedly used to support these false transport records and validate the fake business activities linked to the tax fraud.As part of the probe, the department has issued a notice seeking clarification regarding the use of the vehicles and related transport documentation. Officials are reportedly examining whether the vehicles were knowingly involved in the fraudulent activities or whether they were used without proper oversight.Investigators have described the case as one of the biggest fake ITC scams detected in the state in recent years. The estimated value of the fraud has been pegged at nearly Rs 2,000 crore, raising serious concerns over misuse of the Goods and Services Tax system through shell companies and fabricated transport operations.The department has already intensified its crackdown on the alleged network and has so far arrested seven individuals believed to be key operators in the scam. Officials are currently interrogating the accused to identify the wider network of companies, transport operators, and financial beneficiaries connected to the fraudulent transactions.Authorities are also conducting a detailed examination of fake firms, forged e-way bills, and transport records allegedly used to facilitate the tax evasion racket. Investigators believe that the questioning of arrested suspects may reveal additional links and potentially expose a larger interstate fraud network.

QUICK READ

Summer camp boosts intellectual growth in Ripponpete

Ripponpete
A summer children's camp organised by the Library Awareness Centre concluded at the Gram Panchayat hall with a closing ceremony attended by students, teachers and organisers. T M Narasimha, former president of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat taluk unit, said summer camps help enhance intellectual abilities and make holidays meaningful for children. He added that participation in diverse activities with other children builds skills, encourages expression of talent, and fosters social interaction and confidence development. Students showcased group dance, singing and drama performances during the programme, with organisers Shalini, Lakshmi and Wahida also present at the event. Overall, the camp aimed to support creativity, learning and confidence development skills.

Police arrest two for illegal cattle transport

Moodbidri
Police in Moodbidri arrested two men, Mohammed Arif and Imran alias Ibrahim, for allegedly transporting cattle illegally in a car after a dramatic chase near Gundukallu Cross. Police received credible information during patrol that cattle were being moved from Beluvai towards Marnaadu Aliyoor route. When officers attempted to stop the vehicle, the accused sped away and later abandoned the car inside a compound, trying to escape on foot. Police chased and detained both suspects, recovering a calf tied cruelly in the rear seat after removing seats and covering with plastic. They have prior cases including cattle theft, NDPS and related offences registered across multiple stations, and vehicle was seized authorities.

Series protests demand cancellation of nuclear project plan

Sagara
A series of protests has been announced demanding the cancellation of the proposed nuclear power plant project at Besuru. Project opposition forum president B A Indudhar Besuru said the movement will continue until the government officially withdraws the plan affecting Besuru and other Malnad regions. Protest activities will begin with a demonstration by more than 200 children at Hulidevarabana, followed by a padayatra from Basavanna temple to the Sagara Assistant Commissioner's office. Continuous dharna will be held in front of the AC office, and a major protest is planned at the Shivamogga Deputy Commissioner's office later. Organisers also warned of extending protests to Bengaluru's Freedom Park if demands are not met. They stressed that displacement fears are rising among thousands of families and called for all-party support for the agitation against the nuclear power project proposal.

Hebbalkar questions PM Modi over preventive measures taken

Karnataka minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to explain precautionary measures implemented by the Union government.

UDUPI

Karnataka minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the precautionary measures adopted by the Union government, asking him to clearly explain what actions had been taken instead of merely advising citizens on what they should avoid doing.

Hebbalkar said people across the country were repeatedly being told what not to do during sensitive situations, but the Centre had failed to communicate the preventive measures implemented at the national level. She stated that citizens had a right to know how the government was preparing itself and protecting public interests.

The minister remarked that issuing warnings and instructions alone would not reassure the public unless the government also shared details of concrete administrative steps and safety measures. According to her, transparency in governance becomes especially important during times of uncertainty and public concern.

Hebbalkar also criticised what she described as selective communication by the Centre, alleging that the government often shifted responsibility onto citizens while avoiding accountability regarding its own preparedness. She maintained that effective governance required both public cooperation and visible action from authorities.

During the interaction, the minister urged the Prime Minister to openly address the nation about the preventive strategies being implemented and the steps taken to avoid potential problems. She said such communication would help build confidence among citizens and reduce confusion.

Her remarks come amid continuing political exchanges between the ruling Congress government in Karnataka and the BJP-led Union government on issues related to administration, public safety, and governance.

Hebbalkar further stated that state governments were doing their part to maintain public confidence and ensure smooth administration. However, she stressed that coordinated efforts between the Centre and states were essential in dealing with any major challenge affecting people.

The minister's comments have since triggered political reactions, with opposition leaders defending the Centre's approach while Congress leaders backing Hebbalkar's demand for greater clarity and accountability from the Union government regarding precautionary actions and preparedness measures.

BJP Yuva Morcha stages protest against Hebbalkar

BJP Yuva Morcha workers staged a "Go Back" protest against Karnataka minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar during her Udupi visit.

UDUPI

BJP Yuva Morcha workers staged a "Go Back" protest against Karnataka minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar during her visit to Udupi, accusing her of making controversial remarks and disrespecting the sentiments of the people in the coastal district.

The protest was organised by the Udupi district unit of the BJP Yuva Morcha near the venue of the minister's programme. Demonstrators raised slogans against Hebbalkar and demanded that she apologise for her recent statements targeting the Union government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Police personnel were deployed in large numbers to prevent any untoward incidents and maintain law and order during the protest. Protesters carrying placards criticised the minister's comments and alleged that Congress leaders were attempting to create unnecessary political controversy.

Yuva Morcha leaders stated that Udupi district has always maintained strong nationalist sentiments and accused Hebbalkar of making irresponsible remarks against the Centre. They claimed her statements had hurt the feelings of BJP supporters and patriotic citizens in the region.

The protesters further alleged that the Congress government in Karnataka was trying to politicise sensitive matters instead of cooperating with the Centre on developmental and security-related issues. They warned that similar protests would continue if Congress leaders made remarks perceived as anti-national or misleading.

Despite the protest, Hebbalkar continued with her scheduled engagements under police security. The situation remained peaceful, and no major untoward incidents were reported during the demonstration.

Political tensions between the Congress and BJP have intensified in Karnataka in recent weeks, with leaders from both parties exchanging criticism over governance, public safety, and Centre-state relations.

The BJP Yuva Morcha said its protest was intended to convey public dissatisfaction over the minister's statements and to defend the image of the Prime Minister and the Union government.

Congress leaders, however, defended Hebbalkar, stating that she had merely sought clarification regarding precautionary measures and governance issues. They accused BJP workers of attempting to divert attention from legitimate public concerns by staging protests against opposition leaders.

The Karnataka High Court has upheld arrest proceedings against a Mangaluru man for allegedly wilfully defaulting on court-ordered maintenance payments to his wife.

Karnataka HC upholds arrest over maintenance payment default

MANGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has upheld coercive action, including an arrest warrant, against a Mangaluru resident for allegedly failing to comply with court-ordered maintenance payments to his wife. The ruling reinforces that litigants cannot avoid maintenance obligations by citing pending legal proceedings.

Justice Dr. K Manmatha Rao delivered the order while hearing a petition filed by Shailesh Kumar, who had challenged the arrest warrant issued by the Mangaluru family court. The warrant was issued after he allegedly defaulted on maintenance payments ordered in favour of his wife, Nisha S Kumar.

The High Court observed that repeated non-compliance with maintenance orders amounted to "wilful disobedience" of judicial directions. The bench clarified that courts possess authority under Section 125(3) of the Criminal Procedure Code to enforce maintenance orders through coercive measures, including arrest warrants.

The court stated that maintenance payments cannot be indefinitely delayed merely because related proceedings or revision petitions are pending before higher courts. It also noted that the petitioner had been given sufficient opportunities to explain the default but failed to provide

convincing reasons before the trial court.

Rejecting the petitioner's contention that the arrest warrant violated his fundamental right to personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution, the High Court ruled that lawful enforcement of judicial orders does not infringe constitutional protections.

According to case records, the couple married in 1998 and have a son born in 2000. Following marital disputes, Nisha approached the family court in 2014 seeking interim maintenance of Rs 5 lakh per month.

The family court initially granted interim maintenance of Rs 12,750 per month. After detailed hearings, the amount was later revised to between Rs 1.80 lakh and Rs 2.80 lakh per month for the wife and son, along with 7.5 percent interest on arrears.

Shailesh Kumar challenged the revised order before the High Court, where the revision petition remains pending. Meanwhile, the family court directed him to deposit 50 percent of the awarded amount. Following alleged non-compliance, an arrest warrant was issued, leading to his arrest and later release on bail.

Madhu Bangarappa applauds Beary community's educational & political Legacy

MANGALURU

Primary and Secondary Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa praised the Beary community for its longstanding contribution to education, business, and politics during the decennial celebrations of the Bearys Chamber of Commerce and Industry held at Morgans Gate in Mangaluru on Saturday.

Addressing the gathering as chief guest, Bangarappa recalled the strong support his father, former chief minister S Bangarappa, received from the Beary community in Dakshina Kannada. He said the community had played a key role in strengthening his father politically and socially in the coastal region.

Highlighting the educational progress of the community, he said that during S Bangarappa's tenure as chief minister in 1991 and 1992, permission was granted for a dental college for their community. He added that approval was also given to the Yenepoya institution during the same period, which has since grown into a leading educational establishment in

Karnataka.

Bangarappa also appreciated the efforts of noted social worker Dr Harekala Hajabba in promoting education. He said the government readily approves projects related to schools whenever Hajabba approaches authorities with requests.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Y Abdulla Kunhi, vice chancellor of Yenepoya Deemed to be University. MLA Vedavyas Kamath, MLC Ivan D'Souza, former MLA Moydin Bava, and several other dignitaries attended the event.

During the celebrations, the 'Beary Legend Award' was conferred on Dr. Y Abdulla Kunhi in recognition of his contributions to education and society. Cultural programmes, along with the release of the 'Banya' bulletin and a commemorative souvenir, added colour to the occasion.

Leaders of the Bearys Chamber of Commerce and Industry said the organisation would continue encouraging educational initiatives, entrepreneurship, and cultural preservation among youth. The event also brought together businessmen, community representatives, academicians, and social workers from different districts, reflecting the growing influence of the Beary community across Karnataka and beyond.

Authorities remove unauthorized flower market in Shivamogga

SHIVAMOGGA

Shivamogga civic authorities carried out a clearance drive to remove an unauthorized flower market operating near the Shivappa Nayaka statue in the city, citing public inconvenience and violation of municipal regulations.

The drive was conducted after repeated complaints from residents and shop owners about traffic congestion and obstruction caused by the illegal stalls. Officials said the flower vendors had set up makeshift shops on public space without obtaining necessary permissions from the municipal corporation.

According to officials, the unauthorized market had been operating for several days, leading to crowding in the area, especially during morning hours when flower trade activity peaks. The congestion reportedly affected pedestrian movement and created difficulties for vehicles passing through the busy junction.

During the operation, civic workers dismantled temporary sheds, removed goods

placed on pavements, and cleared the encroached space. Police personnel were deployed to ensure that the eviction process was carried out peacefully and without resistance from vendors.

Officials stated that prior warnings had been issued to the vendors asking them to vacate the area and shift to designated market spaces. However, as the instructions were not followed, the authorities were compelled to take enforcement action.

The Shivamogga City Municipal Corporation reiterated that public spaces must not be occupied for commercial activities without authorization. It added that such encroachments not only violate rules but also hinder smooth traffic flow and pose safety risks.

Some vendors expressed concern over the sudden eviction, stating that the location was important for their daily livelihood. They requested the authorities to provide an alternative space where they could continue their business without disruption.

Civic officials assured that steps would be taken to identify suitable vending zones for displaced traders under the street vending policy. They also emphasized that regular monitoring drives would continue to prevent the re-emergence of unauthorized markets in the city.

Residents welcomed the clearance operation, saying it would help ease traffic congestion and improve cleanliness around the Shivappa Nayaka statue area, which is a prominent landmark in Shivamogga.

TRADITIONAL FOLK PROCESSION

Kolhapuradamma Sidi festival celebrated grandly in 5 Villages

CHIKKAMAGALURU

The Sidi festival of Sri Kolhapuradamma was celebrated with great devotion and grandeur across the five villages of Idoor in Chikkamagaluru district, drawing a large gathering of devotees and showcasing rich traditional rituals.

As part of the festivities at Donikhan Sri Kolhapuradamma temple, the sacred Sidi pole and wooden structure were ceremonially purified by village leaders and devotees using water, followed by the application of oil as per tradition. The structure was then taken in a grand procession through the main streets of the village accompanied by various folk art troupes before being brought to the temple premises.

Before the commencement

of the main ritual, a specially prepared offering known as "Bana" was brought from the Gowda household in a procession to the temple to pacify and sanctify the Sidi pole. After the rituals, the Sidi festival was formally conducted with prayers and celebrations.

The festival is jointly celebrated by residents of five villages—Kote, Donikhan, Hosamane Badavane, Murumanehalli, and Shankarapura—who continue to uphold this centuries-old tradition with deep reverence. One of the unique features of the festival is that farmers from these villages participate by decorating bullock carts and taking part in a procession through Chikkamagaluru town.

Historically, these five villages were part of a unified community that worshipped the same village deity, Kolhapuradamma. Although administrative boundaries later separated them, the shared tradition of worship has continued without interruption.

Locals describe the festival as a symbol of unity, heritage, and devotion. Cultural programs held during the night and the active participation of villagers make the event especially vibrant and significant each year.

QUICK READ

Case registered against illegal cattle trafficking network

CH NEWS, Mangaluru Police in Mangaluru rescued 27 buffaloes being illegally transported in an Eicher goods vehicle near Jappinamogaru on Saturday morning after activists alerted them about suspected cattle trafficking on a highway route. Police stopped the vehicle and checked it finding animals packed in poor conditions without space or ventilation. The buffaloes were reportedly being taken from Haveri to Kerala. Officials suspect violations of animal transport rules. The vehicle was seized and a case was registered. Police said probe is on to trace those involved including owners and tran sporters responsible for the illegal movement of animals in Karnataka and Kerala.

Shivamogga clears illegal flower shops for traffic

CH NEWS, Shivamogga Police in Shivamogga removed illegal flower shops on Old Taluk Office Road to ease traffic and improve public movement, officials said on Saturday. The joint operation was led by traffic police and city corporation staff. The shops had been causing congestion for a long time, forcing pedestrians, students, and vehicles to struggle on the busy stretch. Authorities said traders were earlier given time and alternate space in a nearby parking complex. Despite repeated warnings, encroachments continued, leading to strict action. Officials said the cleared road will now ensure smoother traffic flow and safer walking space for residents and students daily.

Farmers' Association warns of upcoming fertilizer shortage

Basavarajappa raised concerns over fertilizer shortages on Bagarhukum lands, urging fair, timely urea and DAP distribution to protect yields

SHIVAMOGGA

Karnataka State Farmers' Association and Green Army State President H.R. Basavarajappa on Saturday urged both central and state governments to ensure there is no shortage of fertilizers for farmers during the upcoming agricultural season.

Speaking at a press conference in Shivamogga, he said global tensions, including conflicts in the Middle East, have disrupted supply chains and increased prices of fertilizers such as urea and DAP. He added that production has also been affected due to shortage of raw materials imported from abroad.

He claimed that the country requires about two crore tonnes of urea for the monsoon season, but availability is still insufficient, creating a major gap in supply. He warned that this shortage could directly impact crop output and food grain production if not addressed urgently.

Basavarajappa also raised concern that farmers cultivating Bagarhukum lands are not receiving adequate fertilizer supply. He said cultivation is being carried out on about 1.71 lakh hectares of such land, and lack of inputs could reduce agricultural yield and create food security issues.

He urged the government to frame clear distribution rules and ensure timely delivery of urea and DAP to all categories of farmers without discrimination. He said advance planning is necessary to avoid crisis during peak farming periods.

He also commented on the push for organic farming, saying while it is a good long-term goal, immediate transition is not practical. He suggested that the government should support organic farming with subsidies for cattle, sheds, and other required infrastructure.

He criticized certain policy statements, saying farming realities differ from ideal recommendations and implementation challenges must be considered.

He also mentioned that ongoing strike by land surveyors has affected survey work, land records, and legal processes, causing inconvenience to farmers. He urged the government to resolve the issue quickly to restore normal agricultural administration and support rural livelihoods across Karnataka.

KPRDO Shows Support to Nationwide Bandh Through Symbolic Means

BENGALURU

Karnataka Pharma Retailers & Distributors Organization (KPRDO) held a press meet on Saturday to announce that they will not be participating in the Nationwide Bandh scheduled on 20th May 2026 against Online Sale of Medicine and Abnormal Discounts but they will be provide ethical support by wearing black badges/ribbons in the interest of public health.

The Nationwide bandh is scheduled with the aim to fight against the online sale of medicines without prescription requirements on life-saving or life-dangering medicines. For example In-taking medicine without prescription like Opioids, a painkiller, can lead to high risk of addiction or overdosing. It also aims to fight against excessive discounts and violations of law committed by medicine delivery apps.

On 12th May 2026, The Hon'ble Commissioner, Food Safety & Drug Administration (FDA), convened a Zoom meeting to review the proposed Nationwide bandh and appealed to all associations to ensure that there would be no shortage of live-saving medicines during such closures. Their reasoning for this lies in the past several bandh calls which have failed to produce satisfactory results while patients and the general public have suffered due to shortage of medicine when required. Therefore, pharma traders across Karnataka will participate symbolically by wearing black badges/ribbons and in the interest of public health, medical stores will remain open and function as usual to ensure that patients and the public don't face any inconvenience.

Nandini river pollution threatens centuries-old fishing tradition

SURATHKAL

The famous Khandevu fishing festival on the polluted Nandini river in Surathkal witnessed a disappointing turnout this year, raising concerns over the future of one of Tulunadu's oldest traditional celebrations.

Held every year during Vrishabha Sankramana, the festival was once known for attracting thousands of people who entered the river together to catch fish after rituals at the Chelaru Khandevu Ullaya Daivasthana. Families, children and villagers would gather with fishing nets and baskets, turning the event into both a spiritual and community celebration.

This year, however, the riverbanks appeared deserted as pollution in the Nandini river discouraged people from participating. Locals said the river water has become heavily contaminated, with foam floating on the surface and foul smell spreading across the area.

In previous years, at least a few groups would still enter the river despite pollution concerns. But this time, many people were afraid to step into the water. Instead, visitors purchased fish from outside sellers or simply avoided the river altogether.

Residents blamed unchecked pollution and alleged inaction by authorities for destroying the traditional festival. They said the contamination has also affected farming activities and drinking water sources in nearby villages.

Sudhakar Shetty, treasurer of the Chelaru Khandevu Ullaya Daivasthana, said the traditional celebration has become difficult to conduct because of the worsening pollution. He urged authorities to take urgent measures to restore the river and bring back the lost spirit of the festival.

Panchayat cracks down on littering tourists in Sanur

KARKALA

In a strong message against roadside littering, officials of the Sanur Gram Panchayat imposed a fine on a group of tourists who allegedly dumped plastic waste near the Karkala–Moodbidri highway on Saturday.

The incident occurred near Sanur at around 3 pm when tourists travelling from Koppal in two vehicles stopped for lunch along the roadside. After finishing their meal, the group allegedly discarded plastic waste and food packets in the area, leaving the roadside littered.

Sanur Panchayat Development Officer Vishwanath reached the location and confronted the tourists over the act. He insisted that the group clear the waste and pay a penalty for violating cleanliness norms.However, the tourists reportedly resisted the move and refused to pay the fine. According to locals, they questioned whether the panchayat had installed signboards warning against littering and argued that no such system existed in their native place.

The argument intensified before officials contacted police helpline 112 seeking assistance. The tourists were then directed to appear before the Karkala Town Police Station for further action.

Meanwhile, several local residents backed the panchayat officials and appreciated the strict stand taken against littering. Residents said careless disposal of plastic waste by visitors has become a recurring problem in the region and welcomed the enforcement action.Officials also documented the incident by capturing photographs and videos of the waste dumped along the roadside. Sources said the tourists later attempted to avoid proceedings by driving away rapidly through the Padubidri route near Pulkery bypass.Initially, police reportedly informed the panchayat that only a small penalty could be imposed under IPC provisions. Unwilling to let the matter go lightly, the Panchayat Development Officer escalated the issue through district-level authorities.Subsequently, action was initiated under the Panchayat Act, and the tourists were finally fined Rs 2,000. Local residents urged authorities to continue strict enforcement to maintain cleanliness and protect the environment in tourist areas.

Hunsur tax delays spark public outrage

HUNSUR

Residents of Hunsur have raised strong complaints against the Municipal Corporation over delays and issues in issuing property tax receipts. They say that although the city has announced deadlines for payment, many taxpayers are facing difficulties in getting proper acknowledgement after paying taxes.

Locals claim that municipal staff are delaying updates in the system and asking citizens to visit repeatedly for verification and approval. Residents say they are losing work time and facing hardship while trying to complete the tax payment process. Some citizens allege that officials are focusing more on revenue-related tasks while ignoring public grievances in the municipality office. Due to absence of a governing body, people say administrative work has slowed down and accountability has reduced in Hunsur.

He alleged BJP mandated school uniforms banning hijab, while Congress later withdrew the order and permitted hijab again

Araga Jnanendra opposes hijab restriction withdrawal order

TIRTHAHALLI

Senior BJP leader and former Karnataka Home Minister Araga Jnanendra has strongly criticised the Congress government in Karnataka over its decision to withdraw the hijab restriction order in educational institutions, accusing the ruling party of indulging in "minority appeasement politics".

In a statement released to the media on Saturday, Araga Jnanendra said the earlier BJP government had prioritised school uniforms and prohibited the wearing of hijab inside classrooms to maintain uniformity and discipline among students."The BJP government had issued clear directions that school uniforms must be followed and hijab should not be allowed in classrooms. But the Congress government has now withdrawn that order and permitted hijab again," he alleged.

Targeting the Congress government further, the BJP MLA claimed the administration was encouraging religious divisions among students for political gains. He alleged that the Congress leadership was trying to consolidate Muslim votes through various welfare and educational measures aimed at minorities.Araga Jnanendra also criticised the government' s stand on allowing both hijab and religious symbols such as 'janivara' in educational institutions. He argued that schools should promote equality and secular values among children rather than religious identity. He further claimed that several Muslim-majority countries had imposed restrictions on hijab in educational institutions, while Karnataka was moving in the opposite direction. The former minister alleged that the Congress government was pursuing policies aimed solely at vote-bank politics.The BJP lea der warned that such decisions could create social divisions and adversely affect the educational atmosphere in the state. He stated that the BJP would continue to oppose the move politically and ideologically.

Sullia taluk families voluntarily repay government funds

SULLIA

Amid growing discussions over alleged wrongful transfer of more than Rs 20 crore under the Karnataka government's Gruha Lakshmi Scheme to accounts of deceased beneficiaries in Dakshina Kannada district, it has now emerged that families of 22 deceased beneficiaries in Sullia taluk have voluntarily returned the money credited to such accounts.

The matter came to light during a taluk-level review meeting of guarantee schemes held at the Taluk Panchayat hall on May 15. The meeting was chaired by Dakshina Kannada District Guarantee Implementation Committee president Bharath Mundodi.

During the meeting, officials were questioned about reports of funds being transferred to bank accounts of deceased persons. Responding on behalf of the lead bank, an official stated that once such accounts are verified, the process of recovering the money directly from the accounts has already begun.

Officials informed the meeting that more than 8,000 suspicious beneficiary accounts across the district are currently under scrutiny. Bharath Mundodi directed Child Development Project Office officials and anganwadi workers to coordinate with village administrative offices and collect updated records of deceased beneficiaries.The review meeting also revealed that Sullia taluk has achieved 95.45 percent implementation under the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, while 2,058 eligible beneficiaries are yet to submit applications.

Fuel price hike draws strong criticism nationwide

GAJENDRAGAD

Senior Banjara Samaj leader Tara Singh Rathod from Gajendragad has strongly condemned the recent increase in fuel and cooking gas prices announced across the country.

He said petrol and diesel prices have gone up by ₹3 per litre, along with a ₹3 rise in CNG rates, affecting daily life of common people. He alleged that despite falling global crude oil prices, consumers are not receiving any benefit. The LPG cylinder price, which was around ₹413 before 2014, has now crossed ₹1,000, increasing financial burden on households.

He blamed the cen tral government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for repeatedly increasing fuel prices and worsening inflation. He said the latest price hike has further burdened poor and mid dle class families already strug gling with rising cost of living. Rathod warned that if prices are not reduced immediately, people may launch protests against the central government across the country. Locals in Gajendragad expressed concern that rising fuel prices will increase transport costs and make essential goods more expensive in daily markets.

Opposition voices and social groups across the region said the continuous rise in fuel and gas prices shows poor economic management and demanded immediate relief measures from the government to protect workers, farmers, and small traders who are facing difficulties due to inflation and increasing daily expenses nationwide levels rising.

LEGAL-AWARENESS-DRIVE

Koppal jail hosts prisoner reform interaction program

KOPPAL

Koppal District Jail hosted a special interaction program on May 15 aimed at reforming prisoners and encouraging positive change among them. More than 140 inmates participated in the session organized jointly by the District Prisons Department and the District Legal Services Authority.

The discussion was led by noted writer and Kendra Sahitya Akademi awardee Nadoja Dr. Kum. Veerabhadrappa, who engaged the prisoners in open conversation. Inmates raised questions on human behavior, caste system, poverty, hunger and issues related to POCSO cases.

The writer responded with simple explanations and encouraged them to reflect on life and society.

Senior Civil Judge and Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority Mahantesh S. Daragada inaugurated the program and said such interactions help prisoners express themselves freely and think about rehabilitation.

Jail Superintendent Ambarish S. Poojary said the main goal of prisons is reformation, not punishment alone, and such programs support that mission. He added that guidance from writers and experts can help inmates reconnect with families and lead better lives after release.

Assistant Jailer F. G. Barikare, psychiatric counselor A. K. Haoji, prison staff and officials were present during the session. Authorities said similar programs will continue to support behavioral change and social reintegration of prisoners in future.

Officials said the initiative aims to reduce repeat offences and promote dignity, awareness, education, and mental health support among inmates inside the prison system.

Security tightened for JEE Advanced exams in Gadag

GADAG

The Joint Entrance Examination JEE Advanced 2026 will be held on May 17 (today) from 9 am to 5.30 pm conducted by the National Testing Agency New Delhi.

In order to prevent malpractice and maintain discipline, authorities have declared a 300-metre radius around Smt. Kamala and Shri Venkappa M. Agadi College of Engineering and Technology in Lakshmeshwara as a prohibited zone.

Restrictions will remain in force on May 17 from 8 am to 7 pm to ensure fair conduct of the examination.

Only candidates and authorised staff will be allowed inside the centre, while groups of more than five people are restricted.

Xerox shops, book stalls and photocopy centres in the area have been ordered to remain closed during the exam period. Mobile phones and other electronic devices are strictly banned inside examination centres.

QUICK READ

New degree college launches in Koppal city

CH NEWS, Koppal Kalidasa Degree College will start from 2026-27 academic year at Kalidasa Educational Institution near Kushtagi Road in Koppal. A new building was inaugurated with Vastu Shanti Puja on Thursday. Institution president and former MLA Basavaraj Hitnal said the college is started for poor rural students. BA, BSc and BCom courses will be offered. He urged students to take admissions. The campus has clean drinking water, modern toilets, library and CCTV facilities. MLA Rag havendra Hitnala and others attended the event. Officials said the college aims to improve higher education access in the regionand support studen ts with better learning facilities.

Chitradurga Sakhi centre invites social workers applications

CH NEWS, Chitradurga Applications have been invited from eligible women for the post of Case Worker/Social Worker-1 on contract basis for 2026-27 under the Sakhi One Stop Center scheme of the Women and Child Development Department, Chitradurga, officials said. The selected candidate will receive a monthly honorarium of Rs. 25,000. Applicants must hold BSW, BA in Sociology or Women's Studies with two years experience and computer knowledge. Women aged 21 to 45 can apply. Applications open from May 16, last date June 15, and submission deadline is June 16. Forms available at district office or contact details provided.

Hiriyur Council opens aid applications for residents

CH NEWS, Hiriyur Hiriyur Municipal Council has invited applications from eligible beneficiaries for various welfare schemes under 24.10 per cent, 7.25 per cent and 5 per cent programmes for the year 2026-27 and also for 2023-24 to 2025-26, officials said. Last date for submitting applications is May 27. It offers financial assistance to students from other communities in Hiriyur city and support for Divyang students studying MBBS and BE courses. It also provides financial help for differently abled persons to buy plots and support for advocates with disabilities to purchase law books. Applicants can apply with documents at office or official website portal.

Deve Gowda demands protection of farmers' land rights

Deve Gowda expressed concern over Bidadi farmers, alleging township development threatens fertile land without addressing local landowners' concerns

BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda has announced that he is beginning a strong campaign against what he described as irregularities in the proposed Bidadi township project, alleging that farmers' land is being taken unfairly in the name of development. He made the remarks at a press conference held at the JD(S) party office in Bengaluru.

Deve Gowda said he is deeply concerned about the situation of farmers in the Bidadi region and claimed that fertile agricultural land is being targeted for large-scale township development. He alleged that the project is being pushed without properly addressing the concerns of local landowners.

He stated that his "fight starts today" and that he will oppose any illegal land acquisition across Bengaluru and surrounding areas. He also said he has written to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah seeking clarification on land holdings and the status of nearly 20,000 acres of land around the city.

The former Prime Minister questioned who would ultimately benefit from the land acquisition and demanded transparency from the government. He urged authorities to clearly explain how the land will be used after acquisition and whether the interests of farmers are being protected.

Deve Gowda also criticised earlier township proposals, recalling that similar projects had faced strong public opposition in the past. He said farmers in the Bidadi region are engaged in agriculture and dairy activities and depend heavily on the land for their livelihood. He expressed disappointment that local grievances, according to him, have not been properly addressed by officials such as MLAs, tahsildars and district authorities. He said this has led to frustration among farming communities.

Calling for direct intervention, Deve Gowda urged the Chief Minister to visit Bidadi and personally assess the situation. He said only a ground-level inspection would reveal the reality faced by farmers.

He added that he is prepared to take the issue forward politically and legally if necessary, and will continue to oppose any actions that harm agricultural communities. The former Prime Minister said his movement is aimed at protecting farmers' rights and preventing misuse of land acquisition policies in the region.

Supreme Court announces Conciliation Conference 2026

MADIKERI

The Supreme Court of India has announced a special Lok Adalat called Conciliation Conference 2026 to help settle pending cases in an easy and friendly way over three days on August 21, 22 and 23 said Shubha Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority in Madikeri The initiative aims to resolve disputes through mediation and give people a chance to register their cases for settlement at taluk district and state levels Cases from banking insurance civil motor accident consumer family labour property rent and service law are included for resolution she said The conference is seen as an important opportunity for citizens to save time money and reduce long court delays while improving harmony between parties Interested persons or lawyers can register through Legal Services Authorities before May 31 2026 using the official Google Form link available on the Supreme Court website Conciliation Conference Registration and selected cases will be mediated at taluk and district levels with help of legal coordinators said the authority adding that the move will help people.

MLA Subbareddy attends constituency review meeting

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The progress of development works in Bagepalli Assembly constituency was reviewed in a meeting held at the Chikkaballapura District Collector's office, where District Collector G. Prabhu directed officials to speed up land allocation and infrastructure projects for public facilities.

The meeting was attended by MLA S. N. Subbareddy, senior district officials, and representatives from various departments. Discussions focused on land identification for government hospitals, schools, anganwadis, roads, community halls, and other essential public institutions in the constituency.

District Collector G. Prabhu said the administration will ensure timely allocation of land for all approved projects and hand them over to the concerned departments for execution. He warned that if preliminary work is not initiated within three months of land allocation, the land may be withdrawn and reassigned.

He instructed taluk-level officers to closely monitor progress and submit regular reports to the district administration. He also directed urgent identification of 60x40 sites for the construction of 17 Ayushman hospitals in gram panchayat limits under Bagepalli constituency within one week.

The Collector assured that all development proposals submitted by the MLA, including road works, revenue village issues, and site allocations, will be examined and implemented in accordance with legal procedures.

MLA S. N. Subbareddy urged the administration to accelerate preparatory work related to drinking water supply under the Yettinahole project for Bagepalli, Gudibande, and Chelur taluks. He also submitted a list of infrastructure demands for early action.

In a separate District Level Disaster Management Committee meeting, Collector G. Prabhu emphasized that ensuring uninterrupted drinking water supply must be treated as a top priority.

He said nodal officers have been appointed for water-stressed regions and instructed them to visit villages regularly and resolve issues immediately. He directed officials to ensure that any new water problem is addressed within 24 hours.

The Collector reviewed the status of borewells under the Jal Jeevan Mission, including successful drilling, electrification, and pending connections. He expressed concern over delays and warned of strict action if progress is not improved before the next review meeting. He also instructed officials to ensure regular water supply in urban wards and prevent shortages in rural areas, noting that 33 villages and 12 wards are currently facing drinking water issues, with more areas at risk in the coming days.Officials from the revenue, panchayat, and water supply departments attended the meeting and were instructed to treat drinking water management as an urgent priority during the ongoing summer season.

Minister H. K. Patil urged faster excavation, documentation, conservation, and tourism integration of undiscovered heritage structures in the region

Lakkundi set for major archaeological revival push

BENGALURU

Karnataka has unveiled an expanded plan to develop Lakkundi in Gadag district into a globally recognised archaeological and heritage destination, following a high-level state advisory committee meeting chaired by Law and Tourism Minister H. K. Patil at Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru.

Officials said the government is taking coordinated steps to preserve, document and restore the region's rich cultural and historical assets, including ancient temples, wells and inscriptions linked to major dynasties of South India. The initiative aims to transform Lakkundi's heritage revival into a larger public movement with active community participation.

According to the department, around 3,000 antiquities have been collected in Lakkundi over the past year. During a special campaign titled "Search for Antiquities" conducted in May 2026, more than 1,000 artefacts were recovered within a week, along with the discovery of five ancient wells and five temples. Officials also noted that over 1,500 antiquities were gathered during related drives and public participation efforts.

So far, 16 temples in Lakkundi have been declared protected monuments, while efforts are underway to identify 100 wells and 100 ancient temples in the coming phase of the project. The government said 15 wells and 15 temples have already been identified and opened to the public as part of restoration work.

Minister H. K. Patil directed officials to accelerate excavation, documentation and conservation work, stressing that historical references indicate the presence of many undiscovered heritage structures in the region. He also called for integrating restored sites with tourism infrastructure to boost visitor experience.

The meeting also reviewed similar archaeological findings from Hampi and other regions, highlighting the broader cultural richness of Karnataka and neighbouring states. Officials said artefacts from different historical periods, including Chalukya and Vijayanagara eras, underline the region's deep architectural legacy.

India emerging as tech leader, says Governor

BENGALURU

The Governor said Bengaluru Silicon Valley is innovation hub; collaboration among institutions, industry, government startups ensures solutions, while AI era demands ethics, inclusive technology reach

Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot on Saturday said India is no longer just a consumer of technology but is now emerging as a global leader in providing tech-based solutions to major world challenges. He was speaking at the inauguration of the Pan IIT Bangalore Summit 2026 held in Bengaluru on the theme "Empowering India's Decade of Innovation for Nation Buil ding". He said the theme aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi vision of making India a developed nation by 2047.

The Governor highlighted that Bengaluru, known as India's Silicon Valley, is a major hub for innovation, research, and startup activity. He said collaboration between educational institutions, industries, government bodies, and startups is essential to ensure that innovation addresses real societal problems. He added that technology must reach villages, farmers, and the last section of society for inclusive development. He also stressed that in the era of artificial intelligence and advanced technologies, ethical and moral values must be given importance.

He noted that India has become the third largest startup ecosystem in the world due to initiatives like Startup India and Make in India. He said youth should focus on becoming job creators rather than job seekers and contribute to nation building. He encouraged young scientists and engineers to draw inspiration from Swami Vivekananda's message "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached".

Chitradurga District orders faster birth registration process

CHITRADURGA

District Magistrate Dr. Vijayachithanthesh Danachimanachira held a meeting in Chitradurga and directed officials to speed up birth and marriage registration processes and improve record accuracy across the district. He said registration work must be carried out regularly without delays and all offices should display notices to guide citizens. Officials were told that after data entry both registrar and sub registrar must approve records with signatures to avoid errors. The meeting reviewed e Janma system performance and noted thousands of birth and death registrations completed during the current year.

Officials said the district has 793 registration units covering rural and urban areas including health and panchayat offices. Fee collection from birth and death certificates has increased this year through the civil registration system. Officials informed that lakhs of rupees have been collected in registration fees during 2025 and 2026. They also said that timely registration is important to avoid legal and administrative issues for citizens. The administration stressed coordination between health officials, municipal bodies and local registrars for smooth functioning. Officials attending the meeting included police representatives and district staff who reviewed implementation challenges.

Authorities said the goal is to ensure every birth and death is registered promptly so that citizens receive accurate official documents without delay. They added that awareness campaigns will be conducted to improve compliance and reduce missing registrations in rural areas. The district administration also warned that negligence in registration duties would lead to strict action against responsible officials. Officials said continuous monitoring and coordination will ensure efficient service delivery across all registration centres in coming months with full accountability and improved public access ensured across district.

Public participation key to dengue control drive: Cholan

BENGALURU

Commissioner Rajendra Cholan of Bengaluru Central City Corporation said public participation is essential to control dengue in the city. He spoke during National Dengue Day awareness activities held on Saturday across the corporation limits. He said citizens must keep homes and surroundings clean, avoid water stagnation, and prevent mosquito breeding. A special awareness campaign was conducted in all wards with health officers, doctors, and staff from urban health centres and Namma Clinics. The theme this year is Community Participation for Dengue Control Check Clean and Cover, promoting public involvement in prevention efforts. Rallies, jathas, and outreach programmes are being organised with schools, anganwadi workers, and local organisations. He added that precautionary measures are underway across Bengaluru to control mosquito-borne diseases during monsoon season.

ADOLESCENT-HEALTH-INITIATIVE

HPV vaccination drive targets schoolgirls in Chitradurga

CHITRADURGA

A district-level training workshop in Chitradurga has called for strong cooperation between teachers and parents to ensure the successful rollout of the government's Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination programme aimed at protecting schoolgirls from cervical cancer in the future.

Deputy Director of the School Education Department M. R. Manjunath said the campaign will succeed only if schools and families work together. He was speaking after inaugurating the training session organised by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, and Health and Family Welfare Department at the Zilla Panchayat Hall in the city.

Officials said a total of 23,565 girl students from Classes 8 and 9 across the district have been identified for the free vaccination drive. This includes students from government, aided, unaided, Navodaya, CBSE and ICSE schools.

Manjunath said awareness among parents is essential and instructed schools to hold special parent-teacher meetings between May 25 and May 30. He said parents must be clearly informed about the benefits of the vaccine so they can give their consent without hesitation.

He added that the government has introduced the programme as a preventive health measure to protect girls from serious diseases later in life. He appealed to teachers and school authorities to ensure that no eligible student is left out of the drive.

District Reproductive and Child Health Officer Dr. D. M. Abhinava said teachers play a key role in the success of vaccination campaigns, similar to earlier national efforts that helped eliminate diseases like polio and smallpox.He said cervical cancer remains a major health concern globally and in India, and early vaccination can significantly reduce risk. He also noted that awareness has improved after the Covid-19 period but stressed the need for further education about HPV vaccines.

Officials said 12 vaccines are already being administered in the district and HPV vaccination has now been added to strengthen preventive healthcare for adolescent girls.Dr. Abhinava also warned against misinformation, urging people not to believe rumours circulating on social media about the vaccine. He said false claims must be ignored and scientific information should be trusted.

Shah flags drug-free India amid 'jihadi drug' seizure

Shah reiterated that every gram of drugs entering or leaving India, including consignments using the country as a transit route, will face strict consequences

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday announced that the Modi government is determined to make the country free from illegal drugs, highlighting its milestone achievement of seizing the first-ever consignment of Captagon, the so-called "Jihadi drug," worth Rs 182 crore.

In a post on X, Amit Shah said the Modi government is committed to making India drug-free, citing the recent seizure of a consignment of Captagon that was bound for the Middle East.

Shah said that one foreign national was also arrested under Operation RAGEPILL, led by the Narcotics Control Bureau, calling it "a shining example of our commitment to zero tolerance against drugs."

"Glad to share that through 'Operation RAGEPILL', our agencies have achieved the first-ever seizure of Captagon, the so-called "Jihadi Drug", worth Rs 182 crore," Shah said.

For those unfamiliar, Captagon is a synthetic stimulant originally developed in the 1960s to treat conditions such as ADHD, depression, and narcolepsy, but it was later banned internationally over concerns about addiction and abuse.

The minister concluded the post by congratulating the agency and reiterating that every gram of drugs entering or leaving India, including consignments using the country as a transit route, will face strict consequences under its zero-tolerance

QUICK READ

Delhi cops arrest 2 habitual offenders for theft

New Delhi

Delhi Police arrested two habitual offenders and recovered a stolen Tata Stryder bicycle in East Delhi, officials said on Saturday. The case was registered after Laxmi Nagar resident Ravi Dalmia complained about the theft on May 12. A special police team examined over 100 CCTV footages and carried out local enquiries to trace the accused. Following investigation, police arrested Ashwani alias Vipin alias Bochi, 26, and Lalit alias Chuhiya, 23, from Geeta Colony area. Officials said both accused have multiple criminal cases against them. The stolen bicycle was recovered from their possession, and further investigation into the theft case is continuing.

Burglary gang busted, booty recovered

New Delhi

Delhi Police West District Special Staff has busted a burglary gang and arrested two men linked to a house theft in Hari Nagar police said. Cash, laptop, mobile phone and the vehicle used in the crime were recovered during the operation. The theft happened on May 9 at Ajay Enclave where an elderly couple lost valuables worth lakhs of rupees. Police used CCTV footage and technical surveillance to trace the accused across Delhi NCR and nearby cities. Two associates are still absconding and raids are continuing for their arrest as investigation goes on. Police said case shows strong policing efforts

Cops reunite 3 missing children with families

New Delhi

Delhi Police Anti-Human-Trafficking Unit reunited three missing children with their families after tracing them from Delhi and Surat officials said on Saturday. A 12-year-old boy missing since 2021 was found in Vikas Nagar. After his mother's death and his father's remarriage he ran away unhappy at home and stayed in parks and a temple. Two 16-year-old girls had left home with boys they knew from school and neighbourhood and were later found living in Surat in rented homes one working in a restaurant. Police teams used surveillance and intelligence to safely bring all children back to their respective families safely.

Kavitha seeks minister's removal over POCSO probe

HYDERABAD

Telangana Rakshana Sena President K. Kavitha has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking the removal of Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar from the Union Council of Ministers following a police investigation under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act involving his son.

In her letter, Kavitha said the continuation of the minister in a sensitive position could raise concerns regarding institutional propriety and public trust while the investigation is underway. She stated that the inquiry and legal proceedings should be conducted

independently and transparently.

According to the letter, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered on May 8 under provisions of the POCSO Act and relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against the minister's son, Bageerath, based on a complaint filed by the mother of a minor girl.

Kavitha argued that public confidence in the neutrality of the justice system must be protected and requested that Bandi Sanjay Kumar step down from the Ministry of Home Affairs until the investigation and trial are completed.

She further stated that such a move would reinforce confidence in the legal process and demonstrate that due process is being followed without political influence.

As of now, there has been no official response from the Ministry of Home Affairs or the office of the Union Minister regarding the letter or the ongoing investigation.

AAP seeks fair exams after NEET student death

NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Delhi President Saurabh Bharadwaj on Saturday urged the Central government to assure students that examination paper leaks would not recur, following the death of a NEET aspirant in Delhi.

The 20-year-old student allegedly died by suicide at her residence in the Azadpur area days after appearing for the NEET-UG 2026 examination held on May 3. The National Testing Agency (NTA) has since announced a re-examination on June 21 following allegations of a paper leak.

Bharadwaj visited the family members of the student and described the incident as tragic. He said the student had been preparing for admission to a medical college for several years and had narrowly missed selection in the previous attempt.

According to him, the student was reportedly distressed after allegations surfaced regarding irregularities in the examination process. He also claimed that reports of emotional distress among NEET aspirants were emerging from different parts of the country.

The AAP leader called on the government to publicly assure students that examination systems would remain transparent and secure in the future. He urged authorities to identify those responsible for any irregularities and take appropriate action.

Meanwhile, police officials said the family of the student is being questioned as part of the investigation. Authorities stated that no suicide note was recovered. Officials are also examining the circumstances surrounding the incident after the body was reportedly taken for cremation before informing the police.

In a separate incident, another NEET aspirant from Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri allegedly died by suicide on Thursday. Local authorities are investigating the case.

JIH raises concerns over Bhojshala verdict

NEW DELHI

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) has expressed concern over the recent Madhya Pradesh High Court judgment declaring the Bhojshala complex in Dhar a temple and recognising the Hindu community's right to worship at the site.

In a statement issued on Saturday, JIH president Syed Sadatullah Husaini said the verdict has raised questions regarding minority rights, religious freedom, communal harmony and the secular character of the country.

The Indore Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court recently ruled that the Bhojshala complex, also known as the Kamal Maula Mosque, is a temple and observed that the Hindu community's right to worship there had continued historically. The court

also set aside earlier administrative arrangements related to the disputed site.

Reacting to the judgment, Husaini said the issue should be approached with fairness and objectivity due to its sensitive nature. He stated that the decision could have wider implications for public trust in institutions and the constitutional protection of religious rights.

He further said that the site had functioned for years under an arrangement allowing members of different communities to practice their faiths at designated times. According to him, changing such arrangements may affect social harmony and create concerns among communities.

The JIH chief also expressed reservations over suggestions of providing alternative land to the Muslim community, saying places of worship are connected to history, identity and collective memory.

Husaini stated that historical and archaeological interpretations used in such cases should be examined carefully to maintain fairness. He also referred to the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, and said its principles should be upheld.

He added that the Muslim community would continue to pursue legal remedies, including filing an appeal, within the constitutional framework.

Cops intensify crackdown on banned network in Sopore

SRINAGAR

Police in Jammu and Kashmir's Sopore subdivision carried out raids at 15 locations on Saturday during an investigation linked to cases under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.

Officials said the searches were conducted in Bomai, Warpora, Sopore, and Tarzoo to examine suspected connections with the banned Jamaat-e-Islami organisation.

Authorities stated that the operations were part of continuing efforts to weaken networks believed to support separatist and militant activities in the region. Security teams searched homes and other properties for documents, digital devices, and possible evidence related to ongoing investigations.

The central government first banned Jamaat-e-Islami in 2019, calling it an unlawful organisation involved in activities harmful to national security. In February 2024, the Ministry of Home Affairs extended the ban for another five years under the UAPA. Officials accused the group of promoting anti-India propaganda, encouraging militancy, and disturbing peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

The administration has also taken control of several

schools connected with the Falah-e-Aam Trust, which authorities believe has links with the banned organisation. Police have increased raids in North Kashmir during recent months as part of wider security operations.

Although the organisation remains banned, some former members have shown interest in democratic politics and contested the 2024 Assembly elections under different political banners. This has reportedly created divisions among supporters, with some favouring peaceful political participation while others continue supporting the group's earlier ideology.

Officials said investigations would continue across areas to identify financial links, activities, and networks connected to banned groups. Residents were urged to cooperate with security agencies and maintain peace during ongoing operations

FIR against Abhishek sparks political firestorm in Bengal

NEW DELHI

An FIR has been filed against Trinamool Congress leader and MP Abhishek Banerjee over alleged aggressive remarks made during election campaigning, triggering a fresh political row in West Bengal.

Dilip Ghosh said that strict action will be taken against anyone found guilty, stating that those accused of misconduct should now fear consequences as complaints are finally being taken seriously by authorities and the public.

BJP leader Shahnawaz Hussain criticized the remarks, saying such language has no place in democracy and that the FIR was necessary due to inappropriate statements made during campaigning.

The FIR alleges that provocative comments made during the West Bengal Assembly election campaign, including remarks directed at Union Home Minister Amit Shah, were widely circulated on social media platforms and on the MP's official Facebook page.

Political tensions have risen sharply in West Bengal after the FIR, with BJP and Trinamool Congress exchanging accusations over campaign rhetoric. In a separate development, the state government suspended three senior IPS officers over alleged lapses in the RG Kar Medical College rape and murder investigation, as per official statement.

Officials said the FIR and related complaints are being examined under legal procedures, while both parties continue to defend their positions. The case has become a major talking point in the state's political landscape, with leaders urging supporters to maintain calm. Investigations are ongoing, and further action will depend on evidence collected by authorities in the coming days. Political observers note that the controversy is likely to influence upcoming debates, as both parties prepare for continued confrontation over law, order, and campaign conduct in the state.

Digvijaya-Usha clash over 'Sanatan Dharma' debate

INDORE

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh and BJP leader Usha Thakur were involved in a rare public conversation over Sanatan Dharma at Residency Kothi in Indore on Saturday.

The discussion began when Congress workers gathered to meet Singh and Usha Thakur arrived at the venue and started speaking with them about Sanatan Dharma and its values.

Digvijaya Singh then joined the exchange and said he is a follower of Sanatan Dharma and has always respected its traditions in public and personal life. He added that Sanatan Dharma is deeply connected to Indian culture and has guided his personal beliefs and practices for many years.

Usha Thakur responded that Sanatan Dharma is not only about rituals but also about the foundation of Indian life and culture. She said public leaders should openly acknowledge their religious identity and uphold traditional values in their conduct and public responsibility. The exchange also included brief disagreements and light moments but both leaders maintained respectful tone throughout the conversation.

The discussion later touched on a court verdict and both leaders said they respect

judicial decisions and democratic processes in India. The video of their interaction has gone viral on social media and is being widely shared and discussed by users across platforms. Political observers said the exchange reflects ongoing ideological debates between major parties in Madhya Pradesh where religious identity and cultural interpretation often become part of public discussions during political events and campaigns while both leaders continue to defend their personal beliefs and party positions.

'DREAMING BIG'

PM Modi highlights innovation-led future India

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India is entering a new era of ambition, with young people showing strong interest in advanced fields such as Artificial Intelligence and semiconductors.

Speaking to the Indian diaspora in The Hague, he said the country is undergoing a major transformation driven by innovation, technology and digital growth.

The Prime Minister said India today is "dreaming big" and its youth are determined to take the nation forward in emerging industries that will shape the global future. He highlighted that India has become the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, with young entrepreneurs making progress in sectors like AI, defence and space technology.

PM Modi noted that India recently hosted one of the world's largest AI summits, adding that such global events now reflect the country's rising influence.

He also pointed out the success of the G20 Summit hosted by India, saying these achievements show the nation's growing leadership on

the world stage.

He said India's digital progress has been rapid and large in scale, mentioning flagship initiatives such as the world's largest identification programme and a major financial inclusion drive. According to him, these efforts have helped bring millions of citizens into the formal system and strengthened governance.

The Prime Minister also referred to India's advancements in science and space exploration, saying the country has reached parts of the Moon that no other nation had previously explored. He said this reflects India's expanding capabilities in scientific research and innovation.

He added that India is now home to around 125 active unicorn startups and continues to grow as a hub for new ideas and entrepreneurship. The startup ecosystem, he said, is powered mainly by the creativity and energy of young Indians. PM Modi said the spirit of the country is defined by rising aspirations and strong determination. He stressed that India's progress is being driven by a mix of innovation, entrepreneurship, digital infrastructure and inclusive development policies.

He concluded that India's youth will play the most important role in shaping the country's future, as the nation continues its journey toward becoming a global leader in technology and innovation.

IUML key ally in 'secular' politics: Satheesan

The Indian Union Muslim League has consistently taken a strong secular stand and supported the UDF's political position in sensitive situations

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Congress leader and Kerala political figure V D Satheesan has described the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) as a "brother party" and an important force in maintaining the secular character of the state's politics.

His remarks came amid criticism from the BJP and some community organisations claiming that internal political pressure from IUML influenced his selection as the next Chief Ministerial candidate by the AICC.

Satheesan visited IUML leaders at their state office in Thiruvananthapuram and held detailed discussions with senior party representatives. He said the United Democratic Front (UDF), of which both Congress and IUML are key partners, has functioned as a united alliance both inside and outside the Kerala Assembly.

He praised IUML state leadership and said the alliance had worked as a single team, especially under the guidance of senior leaders. According to him, this unity has helped the coalition maintain stability and electoral strength in the state.

Satheesan said IUML has consistently taken a strong secular stand and supported the UDF's political position in sensitive situations. He pointed to past events, including the period following the Babri Masjid demolition, to highlight IUML's role in maintaining a secular approach.

He added that attempts had been made by some groups to create communal divisions in Kerala politics, but IUML

leadership resisted such pressures and maintained a balanced stance. He said this helped preserve social harmony in the state.

The Congress leader also said IUML plays a crucial role in helping UDF candidates win in constituencies where the party has strong influence. He added that coordination among alliance partners remains essential for both elections and governance.

Satheesan emphasised that if IUML's influence weakens, it could create a political vacuum that may affect Kerala's secular structure. He stressed that the relationship between the parties is based on mutual respect and cooperation.

Senior IUML leaders, including P K Kunhalikutty, P M A Salam and E T Muhammad Basheer, were present during the meeting.

Party leaders also expressed support for Satheesan, with IUML leadership stating confidence in his leadership role. The meeting comes at a time when discussions on portfolio allocation and coalition responsibilities are ongoing within the UDF ahead of future government formation decisions in the state.

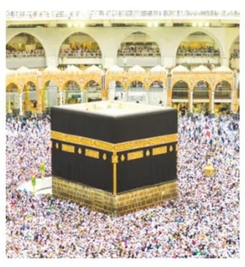
'Discussions on ministerial berths in final stage'

Thiruvananthapuram

Discussions on ministerial berths in the new Kerala government are progressing smoothly after recent high-level meetings in the state capital Thiruvananthapuram ahead of announcement process.

Sunny Joseph met K C Venugopal at his residence to review ongoing alliance talks ahead of final decisions on cabinet formation discussions in Kerala state.

When asked about dissent from senior leaders said the issue has been resolved within the party after internal discussions reportedly recently settled. V D Satheesan is expected to play a key role in the new cabinet discussions as coalition leaders continue consultations in Thiruvananthapuram ahead of formation process ongoing. MP Anto Antony said the United Democratic Front victory is historic and significant and reflects strong public support across Kerala state results analysis. Joseph Vazhakkhan said senior leader Chennithala may decide on his role in cabinet and will consider joining the new government after talks continue. Questions remain over whether Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay will attend the swearing in ceremony which is expected to take place Monday.



India launches short Hajj travel package scheme

KOCHI

Government has launched a short Hajj package for Indian pilgrims to reduce travel time to around 20 days. It is mainly designed for working professionals and business travellers who cannot stay away for long periods. About 10,000 pilgrims will travel under this special scheme.

Earlier Hajj journeys usually take 40 to 45 days. According to officials the plan was introduced after feedback from pilgrims. First flight will leave Kochi on May 17, with departures from Delhi Mumbai Bengaluru Hyderabad Chennai and Ahmedabad. It aims to help pilgrims complete rituals comfortably and return home sooner. Officials say religious duties remain intact.

Devotee donates electric bus to TTD temple trust

TIRUPATI

A Chennai-based devotee has donated an electric bus to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), temple officials said on Saturday. The bus will be used to provide free transport for pilgrims visiting the Sri Venkateswara temple. Donor Vardhaman Jain handed over the vehicle keys to a senior TTD official during a ceremony. He also performed special prayers before the bus at the temple premises. The temple trust accepted the donation and said it will help improve services for devotees. TTD manages the famous Tirumala temple, one of the most visited and richest religious places in India.

Bengal govt dissolves Police Welfare Board

KOLKATA

The West Bengal government on Saturday dissolved the Police Welfare Board Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari said.

The decision was taken after an administrative review meeting held at Diamond Harbour in South 24 Parganas district. He said attacks on police personnel will not be tolerated under any circumstances and strict law enforcement will continue.

The chief minister said the Police Welfare Board had been created with good intentions but later became politicised. He said some people allegedly used it for personal benefits including illegal extensions of service. The government has now decided to abolish the board and strengthen transparent police welfare systems instead.

Adhikari also announced that women police personnel will get priority postings in their home districts. This move aims to help them balance professional duties and personal responsibilities more effectively. He also instructed police to remain alert against infiltration through riverine borders with Bangladesh.

Officials were asked to strengthen surveillance in vulnerable border areas and improve coordination. The chief minister reiterated his government's stand against extortion and illegal collections from transport operators. He urged citizens to report complaints of corruption so that action can be taken quickly.

The meeting reviewed policing and administrative issues across districts with senior officers joining virtually.

Officials said the reforms are aimed at improving discipline, accountability, and public safety across West Bengal. Authorities added that further steps will focus on modernising police welfare systems ensuring transparency strengthening border security and maintaining strict action against crime while also improving working conditions for personnel across the state to enhance efficiency trust and public confidence in law enforcement institutions going forward under new administration.

HM Shah to lead Bastar council meet

BASTAR

Preparations are underway for the 26th meeting of the Central Zonal Council in Bastar, scheduled for May 19, where Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair the session.

The meeting will bring together Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Chhattisgarh to discuss cooperation and development issues. Before the event, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai held a high-level review meeting to check preparations and give instructions to officials.

Officials presented a detailed plan showing topics and proposals the Chhattisgarh government will raise during the council meeting. He assigned responsibilities and directed smooth coordination so that arrangements are completed without any problems.

The Chief Minister said that member states play an important role in achieving the vision of a developed India. He added that these councils are strong platforms for dialogue and resolving issues between states and the Centre.

The Chief Minister said hosting the event in Bastar is a matter of pride for Chhattisgarh. He noted that it reflects peace restored in the region under leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The council is expected to strengthen coordination among states and support faster development in the region while improving communication between state governments and the central government in India. Officials said it will also highlight peace and stability in Bastar under continued development efforts by the government India.

Modi govt lifted 30% out poverty: Gajendra Singh

JAIPUR

Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said the Narendra Modi government has helped lift about 30 crore people above the poverty line through welfare schemes focused on poor welfare and direct benefits.

He was speaking at a night choupal and village programme in Bhiluda village of Dungarpur district. He said many families who once struggled with poverty are now living with dignity due to central government schemes.

He recalled the Covid 19 period when Prime Minister Narendra Modi ensured no poor person slept hungry by starting a free ration distribution programme.

Under this scheme, free food grains were provided to nearly 80 crore people across the country and the support continues even today.

He praised the Rajasthan government led by Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma for appealing to financially stable families to voluntarily surrender their BPL cards so that benefits can reach the needy. He said around 80 lakh people in Rajasthan gave up their BPL cards, saying they no longer needed support.

Shekhawat said this shows positive social change through welfare policies. He also highlighted the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme under which farmers receive Rs 6000 every year directly in bank accounts. He added that Rajasthan has increased assistance to Rs 10000 under a double engine government model. He said the government is also focusing on youth through education, skills and healthcare programmes to create better jobs and stronger future opportunities for the country.

He said these efforts together reflect inclusive governance and aim to reduce inequality while strengthening rural economy and ensuring long term development across India with continued welfare support for citizens nationwide.

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ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಮಾದನಾಯಕನಹಳ್ಳಿ ನಗರಸಭೆ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ **2026–27** ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನಗರಸಭೆ ನಿಧಿ ಅನುದಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಮತ್ತು ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಪರಿವೀಕ್ಷಣಾಲಯ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ದರ್ಜೆ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಲು ಮೊಹರಾದ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: INDENT58379-CALL-2, INDENT58364(Category-2A), INDENT58125(Others), INDENT58351(Category-2A), INDENT57316(Category-2A), INDENT56237-CALL2, INDENT58108 (Others), INDENT58109(SC Reserved), INDENT58110 (SC Reserved), INDENT58111(Others), INDENT58112(Others), INDENT58113(Others), ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ದಿನಾಂಕ: **01.06.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30** ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ **2)** ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 03.06.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5.30** ವರೆಗೆ. **3)**ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಿಡ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **05.06.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00** ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. **4)** ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ **ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ** ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು,
ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಮಾದನಾಯಕನಹಳ್ಳಿ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಾ.ಪ್ರ/713/ಶಿರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/2026–27

(Government of Karnataka)
RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION DEPARTMENT HASSAN DIVISION HASSAN
Phone No.08172-261640 Email Id:eerdwsd.hsn@gmail.com
TWO COVER SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 01/2026-27 DATED : 14.05.2026

On Behalf Governor of Karnataka, The Executive Engineer Rural Water Supply & Sanitation Department Hassan Division Hassan Has Invited the Tender for the works of Holenarasipura Taluk Approved under 2215 MVS O&M Mention Below, Two Cover System works Holenasaripura Taluk 02 Work. Above work tenders are invited in Two cover system in e-procurement portal. The tender details are available in https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in From 15.05.2026 After 11:00 A.M. The contractors can contact the office during office hours till 25.05.2026 and get any information. The bidder should submit the tender within the dated: 29.05.2026 before 05.00 P.M. On Dated:22.05.2026 The Pre-bid Meeting will be conducted in this office, Interested Contractor may participate. Venue : Office of the Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Zilla Panchyath Building, N.R, Circle Hassan. The Technical bid will be open on dated: 30.05.2026 after 05:30 P.M. The Financial bid of the Technically qualified bidder will be open on dated: 01. 06. 2026 after 05.30 P.M The Executive Engineer has reserved the rights of to cancel all tender or any one tender without giving any reason.

Sd/- Executive Engineer Rural drinking water and sanitation Dept, Hassan division, Hassan.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/140/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27

Government of Karnataka - Zilla Panchayat
Office of The Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru
Ph No.: 08262-220936 e-mail: zpedckm@rediffmail.com
Tender Notice No.:45/2025-26/2nd Call/421 D: 15.05.2026
Tender Notice 2nd call

Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru invites Tenders through K.P.P.P. related to works ofKoppa, N.R. Pura andSringeriTaluks in Chikkamagaluru District. Max. Approx.Amount put to Tender is Rs. 84.15 lakhs and Min. Approx. Amount is 50.45 lakhs.Details of capability to undertake or of having implemented the works should be attached as per Standard Tender Document KW –3. For the said works the documents downloaded from K.P.P.P. can be filled and uploaded from 15.05.2026 to 25.05.2026 up to 5.30 PM. Technical Bid will be opened on 27.05.2026 at 5.30 PM. If possible the Financial Bid will be opened on 02.06.2026 at 11.00AM. If this dayis declared as holiday then the next day will be considered. Notice can be read on www.kppp.karnataka.gov.inFurther details can be obtained by contacting the case worker during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru.

DIPR/CKM/KSMCA/26-27/34/241

Government of Karnataka
(Infrastructure Development, Ports & Inland Water Transport Department)
Karnataka Maritime Board
Office of the Chief Executive Officer,
Karnataka Maritime Board, Baithkol, Karwar-581302
No.KMB-26/WKS-III/2025-26 Dated: 14.05.2026
SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTICE
(Only in E-Procurement) (TWO COVER SYSTEM)

Short Term Tender is invited by the undersigned in E-Procurement Portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement (KTPP) Act-2000 from the contractors/ firms registered in Karnataka labour department, ESI & EPF. The registered firms/ contractors having similar nature of work experience can participate in the tender process and can download the tender documents and other conditions of work from E-procurement portal **(https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/kppp)** for the work mentioned below. For further Extension if any refer above mentioned website. No separate paper notification will be issued.

Name of work: Providing Security Guards (with arms), Security Guards (without arms), Security Supervisor through outsource basis for Karwar and Old Mangalore port. **Service Estimate Number (IDD/2026-27/SE0071),** Tendered Cost: **Rs.1,66,39,200.00 (Excluding GST)**, EMD: **Rs. 2,50,000.00**, Last date for Queries/ Clarification: **22.05.2026 @ 17.00 hours,** Last Date of receipt of Tender: **27.05.2026 @17.00 hours**

For further details and general queries, interested firms/ contractors may contact the undersigned office **E-mail: piwtdev.wks@gmail.com** / phone No.: **08382 221035/221494** during working hours, before last date of quarries.

DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/135/26-27
Dt: 14.05.2026

Sd/- Port Engineer, Karnataka Maritime Board, Karwar

Government of Karnataka
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MINOR IRRIGATION AND GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT DIVISION,
KALABURAGI, e-mail: midnglb@rediffmail.com / midnglb1@gmail.com,Ph.08472 - 220196
IFT No. EE/MI & GWD D/KAL/PB-3/2026-27/ 870 DATED : 16-05-2026
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (IFT KW-4)

1) Detail of Work : **THE EXEUCTIVE ENGINEER, M.I. & G.W.D. DIVISION, KALABURAGI INVITES TENDER FROM THE ELIGIBLE TENDERERS FOR THE WORK UNDER 2025-26, KKRDB and 4702 A.P.B FOR THE YEAR 2025-26**, 2) Amount of Estimate : Max. **Rs.121,06,131.94, Min. Rs.108,99,111.36**, 3) Eligibility of Contractor : Class-III & Above, 4) Details of Tender Application Amount and EMD Amount : Tender Fee : As Per KPP Portal E.M.D. **Max. Rs. 2,00,000.00, Min. Rs. 2,00,000.00,** 5) Pre-Bid Meeting Date & Time : 22.05.2026 Upto 11.00 Hours, 6) Last Date & Time for Tender Queries / Clarifications : 29.05.2026 Upto 11.00 Hours 7) Last Date & Time for Receipt of Tenders : 30-05-2026 Up to 17.30 Hours, 8) Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid : 01-06-2026 Up to 17.30 Hours, 9) Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid : 02-06-2026 Up to 17.30 Hours,10) Addl. information : Executive Engineer M.I. & G.W.D. Division, Kalaburagi, 11) Address of KPP-Portal : (https://kppp.Karnataka.gov.in)

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division, Kalaburagi

DIPR/Kalaburagi/137/
Deshpande Publicity/2026-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
MINOR IRRIGATION AND GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT
Office of the Executive Engineer,Minor Irrigation and Ground water development Divison, Mandya E mail: eemimandya@gmail.com
No:EE:MID/MDY/PB/AE-1/TB-2/2026-27/1222 Date:16.05.2026
SHORT TENDER NOTIFICATION NO: 02/2026-27, Dated: 16.05.2026

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, Executive Engineer, M.I & G.W.D Division, Mandya invited item wise Tender from eligible contractors under " KPP " Portal as per the terms and conditions prescribed in standard tender bid documents KW-3 & KW-4 there are 8 No's of works amount put to tender ranging from Rs. 67.44 Lakhs. to as high as Rs. 349.15Lakhs. The Details are as below.

Sl No	Head of Account	Works	Last date of Uploading the tender in KPPP & time	Technical Bid Opening date & time	Financial Bid opening date & time
1	4702-LIS-Major Works	1	Dt:05.06.2026, 17-29 Hours	Dt:06.06.2026, 17-30 Hours	Dt:08.06.2026, 17-30 Hours
2	4702-A&P-Major Works	5			
3	4702-SCP-Checkdam	2			

Any information regarding this tender may be obtained from this office during Working hours. The tenders may be uploaded (Technical and Financial bids to be uploaded separately) with the prescribed E.M.D and requisite documents through website www.kppp.karnataka.govt.in.

Note: All the rights and decisions if any of all works or any of the work of this tender reserved by the under signed. Terms and conditions required for each work is published in the "www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in "Tender Portal. Any additional information is available at the office of the undersigned. Any corrections /Date Changes/ Addendum and Corrigendum regarding each individual works will be published separately in "kpp " portal only.

Sd/-Executive Engineer, MI & GWD Division, Mandya.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ–ಮಂ/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿ&ಎ/134/2026–27

QUICK READ

US lawmakers demand release of Uyghur prisoners

MUNICH

US lawmakers increased pressure on China after both chambers of Congress unanimously passed resolutions seeking the release of Uyghur prisoners and other detained activists. The resolutions were approved during President Donald Trump's visit to China and mentioned jailed Uyghur doctor Gulshan Abbas among several prisoners. The World Uyghur Congress welcomed the move and called for stronger international action against alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang. American lawmakers and rights groups continue accusing China of mass detentions, forced labour, and suppression of Uyghur culture and religion.

Petrobras restarts fertilizer plant to cut imports

SAO PAULO

Brazil's state-run energy company Petrobras has restarted fertilizer production at the Bahia Fertilizer Plant to reduce the country's dependence on imported nitrogen fertilizers. The reopening was highlighted during President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's visit to the facility. Petrobras said the plant, closed since 2019, now produces around 1,300 tons of urea daily, meeting nearly five percent of Brazil's demand. The company invested almost BRL 100 million in restarting operations, creating thousands of jobs. Petrobras plans to reopen more fertilizer plants by 2028 and aims to supply 35 percent of Brazil's domestic nitrogen fertilizer needs through expanded production nationwide.

Balochistan leaders warn of rising violence crisis

QUETTA

Security conditions in Pakistan's Balochistan province have worsened sharply, with ministers admitting the region now resembles a "war-like" situation. During a provincial assembly session, lawmakers from both government and opposition parties criticised authorities for failing to control violence. Senior minister Mir Sadiq Umrani said attacks on police stations, extortion threats, and militant activities had become common. He revealed that even his home had been attacked several times. Home Minister Zia Langove also accepted that security remained poor despite heavy protection for lawmakers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public at large is hereby notified that, my client/s has agreed to purchase the under mentioned properties from its Owners Mr. Leo Quadros, son of Bonaventure Quadros. If any person/(s), including Bank, Financial Institution, Private Financier and all Statutory Authorities, claiming any right interest, objections or charges on the under mentioned schedule properties or any part thereof, is /are hereby required to contact me and also lost Original Sale Deed (Document bearing No. 83/2003-04 dated 17-04-2023, near Hennur Road, Lingarajpuram, regarding this complaint (Lost Report No.1508649/2025) has been lodged on 06-03-2025, So, if anybody finds the aforesaid Original Sale Deed Please Contact at No.13/2, El-Shedai, 1st Floor, 2nd Cross, behind Assesi Church, Lingarajapuram, Hennuru Road- Bangalore-43 with documentary evidences, within 07 (Seven) days from the date of this publication, as otherwise the said transaction will be completed without any references or regards to any such purported claim or interest, which shall be deemed to have been waived for all intents and purposes.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Immovable Residential Properties bearing Vacant Site No.329/694, RDPR No. 15030030270012537, totally measuring 211.28 Sq.Mtrs situated at Udanahalli Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District, bounded on **East by:** Site No. 699 , **West by:** Road, **North by:** Site No. 695 and **South by:** Road.

Sd/- Ranjitha HN, Advocate
Mob:+917795921905 Email:ranjithakote1994@gmail.com

US-Nigeria eliminate top ISIS leader

Nigerian and US forces killed IS second-in-command Abu-Bilal al-Minuki during a joint raid

ABUJA

Nigerian President Bola Tinubu has highly praised a successful overnight military operation conducted jointly by Nigerian and American forces, which successfully eliminated Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, the global second-in-command of the Islamic State (IS).

In an official public statement released from the capital, President Tinubu described the precision strike as a brilliant example of effective international cooperation against global terrorism. Initial battlefield assessments confirmed that the high-ranking terrorist mastermind, also known regionally as Abu-Mainok, was killed alongside several of his closest lieutenants during a highly tactical raid on his fortified compound located within the Lake Chad Basin.

The major breakthrough was also announced by US President Donald Trump via social media. Trump revealed that the complex, meticulously planned mission was executed flawlessly under his direct command.

He emphasized that the elusive terrorist leader can no longer threaten African communities or orchestrate deadly plots against global targets,

noting that the victory heavily destabilizes the extremist group's operational funding network.

Born in Nigeria's northeastern Borno State, the 44-year-old al-Minuki had been a prominent target for international intelligence agencies for years.

He took control of the IS West Africa branch in 2018 and was officially designated as a global terrorist by the United States government in 2023.

President Tinubu extended his deepest gratitude to the brave soldiers for their incredible courage, discipline, and professional execution.

He reiterated Nigeria's firm commitment to launching more decisive, strategic strikes to completely dismantle remaining militant enclaves across West Africa.

India-Italy deepen space-tech ties

INDIA

The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) has successfully led a prominent delegation of domestic space-tech firms to the prestigious Space Meetings Veneto 2026 event held in Venice, Italy.

The strategic international visit aims to aggressively expand the global footprint of India's rapidly growing private space ecosystem. During the high-profile gathering, the Indian delegation held extensive commercial talks with the Italian Space Industry Study Group, resulting in multiple landmark agreements that promise to reshape bilateral technological cooperation.

Among the major announcements, Karnataka-based Astrobase Space Technologies signed a vital Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Impulso Space to secure seamless customer launch opportunities. Simultaneously, Kepler Aerospace finalized an extensive framework agreement with Apogeo Space to expand Global Ground Station as a Service (GSaaS) networks and enhance critical satellite infrastructure collaboration between India and Europe. Furthermore, tech firm Vyom-IC unveiled a new strategic partnership focused strictly on developing next-generation navigation systems.

Dr. P.K. Jain, a director at IN-SPACe, emphasized that these new partnerships highlight the increasing competitiveness and readiness of Indian enterprises on the global stage. He noted that the signed deals reflect immense international confidence in India's private scientific capabilities.

This successful European visit follows a reciprocal trip by an Italian aerospace delegation last year. It directly aligns with the ambitious 2025-2029 India-Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan, signaling a shared long-term commitment to leading the future global space economy.

A devastating measles outbreak in Bangladesh has killed twelve more children, raising the national death toll to 451

Measles surge: Over 1,000 hospitalized in Bangladesh

DHAKA

A devastating measles outbreak in Bangladesh has claimed the lives of twelve more children, raising the national death toll to a staggering 451.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) confirmed the latest fatalities occurred within a single 24-hour testing window.

According to local medical data, four of the deceased were officially confirmed measles cases, while eight other children died exhibiting severe symptoms of the highly contagious virus. The quick-spreading outbreak also saw 111 newly confirmed infections, pushing hospital admissions to over 1,000 patients within a single day.

In response to the emergency, the Bangladesh Lung Foundation urged health officials to instantly set up specialized "fever corners" at local clinics for early detection. Medical experts blame the worsening crisis on poor vaccination coverage from last year combined with high child malnutrition rates.The health disaster has also triggered massive public anger. Furious protestors took to the streets in Dhaka, demanding accountability from the country's former interim government leaders, Muhammad Yunus and Nurjahan Begum, for allegedly dismantling the nation's functional vaccine procurement system without a viable replacement.

Local media editorials heavily criticized the previous administration for squandering two decades of steady immunization progress, labeling the current crisis an avoidable human disaster. With public hospitals overflowing, the newly appointed health authorities are under immense pressure to launch emergency vaccination campaigns to protect vulnerable infants and permanently halt the deadly spread.

Intense future droughts threaten NZ agri

HAMILTON

New Zealand's future droughts could be far more devastating than previously imagined. New research reveals that the nation's current climate safety policies are dangerously underestimating the threat by ignoring historical weather patterns from the early 20th century.

Experts Adam Brown and Luke Harrington from the University of Waikato warn that as the planet warms, severe dry spells will intensify. For an agricultural nation like New Zealand, this is an incredibly ominous outlook. Recent droughts have already given citizens a terrifying glimpse of what lies ahead, featuring browned farm paddocks, shrinking water reservoirs, dried-out riverbeds, and farmers desperately struggling for animal feed.

These modern events have already inflicted a heavy economic toll.

For instance, a major drought in 2007 quadrupled feed prices and cost the country billions of dollars. Another widespread dry spell just four years later managed to wipe out a significant portion of the entire nation's economic output.

However, the researchers point out a critical flaw in current planning. Most modern safety models only look at weather data stretching back to the 1970s.

By analyzing deeper history, scientists discovered that New Zealand's three most extreme droughts actually occurred before 1950.

The worst historic dry spell hit in 1914, followed by massive droughts in 1907 and 1945.

SRI LANKA RAISES TAX ON CAR IMPORTS

COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan government has introduced a temporary 50 percent surcharge on vehicle imports in a direct effort to protect its sliding national currency. The new emergency tax measure specifically targets passenger cars while completely excluding everyday transport options like motorcycles and traditional three-wheelers. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who also serves as the nation's finance minister, officially announced the directive. According to the signed government notification, this additional 50 percent levy on existing customs duties will take effect immediately and remain active for a strict period of three months. The emergency decision comes as the Sri Lankan rupee faces intense downward pressure, having depreciated by over three percent against the US dollar by the middle of this month.

Indian ministerial visit enhances Caribbean ties

ROSEAU

Indian Union Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita has held high-level diplomatic talks with Dominica's President Sylvanie Burton to aggressively strengthen bilateral ties. The significant meeting in Roseau focused strictly on deepening the commercial and political partnerships between the two democratic nations. President Burton holds a historic legacy, having become the first woman and the first indigenous leader from the Kalinago community to serve as Dominica's head of state since 2023. Minister Margherita extended warm official greetings from India's President and Prime Minister, emphasizing a mutual commitment to exploring fresh economic collaborations.

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE & J.M.F.C AT DEVANAHALLI
C. MIS.NO.161/2026

BETWEEN:- 1. T. Murthy S/o Thuntappa Aged about 42 years, Uganavadi Post, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli taluk-562110 Bangalore Rural District. **2. Padmavathi T,** D/o Thuntappa, W/o Manjunatha H, Aged about 36 years, R/ at Hulimangala Hosakote, H. Hosakote Post, Malur taluk - 563160. **3. Thuntappa,** S/o late Hanumappa, Aged about 68 years, Residing at. Devaganahalli, Uganavadi Post, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli taluk-562110 Bangalore Rural District. **... PETITIONERS**

AND: The Tahsildar, Devanahalli Taluk Office, Devanahalli - 560 002 **...RESPONDENT**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the petitioners has filed the above petition under section 13(3) of the Registration of Birth and Deaths Act 1969 for seeking direction of the respondent authority to issue death certificate of RANGAMMA W/o Thuntappa, who was died on 11.04.2022 in her native house at Devaganahalli Village, Uganavadi Post, Kundana Hobali, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District and the Hon'ble court has posted for the above petition on: 08.07.2026 for hearing of the petition. If any person/s desire to oppose the said petition or claim or interest shall appear before the Hon'ble court in person or by pleader duly interested at 11.00AM failing which the said petition will be disposed on enquiry.

Given Under my hand seal of this Court today i.e., on 14.05..2026

Order by court
Chief Ministerial Officer, II Addil. & J.M.F.C Court, Devanahalli

Amarnath M, Advocate, Sree. Gururaghavendra Law Chamber, Ground Floor, 4th Main, 6th Cross, Opp. Court Complex, Doddaballapura

Indian mangoes make sweet debut in Seattle

SEATTLE

The highly anticipated king of fruits has officially arrived on shelves across the US Pacific Northwest.

Following a dedicated, year-long trade outreach initiative involving premium distributors and local consumers, Indian mangoes are making a triumphant, fresh entry into the competitive Seattle retail market.

The high-profile fruit launch gained widespread local media attention after a vibrant segment was aired. Speaking on the broadcast, India's Consul General in Seattle, Prakash Gupta, proudly showcased the prized arrivals. He explained that mangoes hold a deeply sentimental value for the global Indian diaspora, traditionally symbolizing the beautiful onset of summer, sweet childhood nostalgia, and joyful family bonding.

The successful commercial expansion is being widely celebrated as a triumph of "mango diplomacy." The historic trade relationship dates back to 2006 when former US President George W. Bush famously tasted an Alphonso mango in India and praised its unmatched flavor, kickstarting initial American imports.

To secure this weekend's rollout, the Indian Consulate hosted large-scale tasting events last year featuring premium Kesar, Dasheri, and Langra variants. The targeted campaign successfully generated immense consumer interest, prompting major supermarket chains, delivery apps, and local grocery stores to stock the exotic fruit.

Starting now, eager shoppers can officially purchase authentic Indian mangoes at specialized markets and select Costco outlets across Seattle, Kirkland, and Redmond. Local food enthusiasts are thrilled by the timing, noting that the delicious arrival perfectly coincides with the city's very first sunny summer weekend.

Pak's hydropower dreams stall under crushing debt

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's vital water security and energy infrastructure plans are collapsing into severe uncertainty, with key megaprojects facing generational delays due to an acute financial crisis and skyrocketing construction costs.

Leaked official documents paint an alarming picture of the country's long-term utility planning. Under current federal funding allocations, several flagship dams and canal systems originally championed as immediate remedies for Pakistan's crippling blackouts and water scarcity, will now take decades, and in some extreme cases, centuries to complete.

The crisis is even more absurd within smaller, under-funded regional schemes. Official government estimates suggest the Naulong Dam will require 122 years to complete, while the Chashma Right Bank Canal would astonishingly take nearly 1,900 years to finish under the current economic trajectory. Furthermore, a critical PKR 194 billion national flood protection program will remain unbuilt for centuries, leaving millions of citizens highly vulnerable to extreme climate disasters.

Economists warn that as Pakistan battles severe inflation and high debt-servicing costs, its foundational resources are rapidly eroding. Without an immediate injection of foreign direct investment or a drastic restructuring of the federal budget.

FINANCIAL NUMBERS BEHIND STAGNATION

Dasu Hydropower Project
The estimated cost has ballooned to a colossal PKR 1.74 trillion. At the current pace of fiscal funding, completion will take an estimated 65 years. Authorities are desperately requesting PKR 145 billion in the upcoming budget just to keep the lights on at construction sites.

Diamer-Bhasha Dam
Total costs have breached PKR 1.04 trillion. With the next fiscal year's proposed funding sitting at a meager PKR 93.77 billion, engineers estimate a 46-year delay before the reservoir is operational.

Mohmand Dam
This project requires at least 14 more years as its price tag climbs past PKR 337 billion.

Urban Water Infrastructure
The vital K-IV water supply scheme for a parched Karachi is now delayed by another decade with costs soaring past PKR 175 billion. Shockingly, the Kachhi Canal project could take more than a century to finish.

HISTORIC INCLUSION

Nepal sets up Gender and Sexual Minorities Ministry

KATHMANDU

In a historic move, Nepal has officially established a federal ministry that explicitly recognizes sexual minorities.

This landmark restructuring highlights the nation's ongoing progression toward highly progressive and liberal policies for its Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer (LGBTIQ) community.

The newly formed government, led by Prime Minister Balendra Shah, integrated the specific phrase 'Gender and Sexual Minorities' into the title and official mandate of a department during a sweeping administrative overhaul. According to the newly published Government of Nepal Allocation of Business Regulations, the entity is officially named the Ministry of Women, Children, Gender and Sexual Minorities and Social Security.

This revamped body is tasked with the protection, social upliftment, empowerment, and legal development of gender minority groups. It will also safeguard marginalized citizens, Dalits, and individuals living in economically backward regions. The policy change comes after a specialized committee recommended slashing the total number of federal ministries from 21 down to 18 to boost efficiency. Prominent human rights groups, including the Blue Diamond Society, enthusiastically celebrated the announcement, labeling it a long-awaited milestone that cements dignity and inclusion within the national governance framework. Activists also highly praised lawmaker Bhumika Shrestha for her tireless political advocacy in securing this structural victory. Already considered a human rights leader in South Asia, Nepal legally protects gender identity under its constitution and issues third-gender passports. Local activists believe this formal ministry will permanently eliminate systemic discrimination and foster true societal inclusion across the country.

QUICK READ

IIT-K-incubated startup inks pact for e-compact tractor

NEW DELHI

An SIIC IIT Kanpur-incubated startup, ScaNxt Scientific Technologies, entered into an agreement with two institutions under the Ministry of Science and Technology for the technology transfer of India's first indigenously developed 100 per cent electric compact tractor, a statement has said. The electric compact tractor, developed with over 90 per cent indigenous components, has been specifically designed for India's small and marginal farmers.

Conventional diesel-based mechanisation models have historically remained economically inaccessible for small land holders, creating a structural productivity gap across rural India. India's agricultural economy remains heavily dependent on smallholder farmers, with over 86 per cent of farming households operating on less than 2 hectares of land.

'File FIRs against Ola, Uber, Rapido for illegal ops'

NEW DELHI

Maharashtra Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik has directed the Cyber Crime department to lodge FIRs against Ola, Uber and Rapido over alleged illegal bike taxi operations in the state. The minister further clarified that app-based mobility platforms Ola, Uber and Rapido continue to operate in the state as we sought legal action against their alleged unauthorised bike taxi services. The clarification came after reports circulated on social media claiming that the services of Ola, Uber and Rapido had been completely shut down in Maharashtra. In a post on X, the Directorate General of Information and Public Relations (DGIPR), Maharashtra, said such reports were misleading and stated that the government's action is limited only to illegal bike taxi operations.

India's jaggery export value surge over 106% in 10 years

NEW DELHI

India accounts for more than 70 per cent of global jaggery production and has seen jaggery exports rise 106.5 per cent in value between 2015–16 and 2024–25, the government said on Saturday. Exports during April–January 2025–26 reached 450.1 metric tonnes, valued at $384.4 million, up about 16.5 per cent in volume and 15.9 per cent in value on a year-on-year basis, an official statement said. Complementing this growth, government initiatives such as Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana, PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme, and One District One Product, along with GI tagging, contributed significantly to promote value addition, strengthen rural enterprises, and enhance export potential.

Global oil prices jump over 3% amid rising US-Iran tensions

Investors reacted nervously to fresh diplomatic friction and fears that the fragile ceasefire in the region may not hold

NEW DELHI

Global crude oil prices recorded sharp gains as escalating tensions between the United States and Iran raised concerns over possible disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most vital energy transit routes.

Investors reacted nervously to fresh diplomatic friction and fears that the fragile ceasefire in the region may not hold, pushing benchmark oil contracts to their highest weekly gains in months.

Brent crude futures settled at 109.26 dollars per barrel, rising by 3.54 dollars or 3.35 per cent during the trading session. Meanwhile, United States West Texas Intermediate crude closed at 105.42 dollars per barrel, gaining 4.25 dollars or 4.2 per cent.

On a weekly basis, Brent crude advanced 7.84 per cent, while WTI surged 10.48 per cent as traders closely monitored developments in the Middle East and growing uncertainty surrounding global energy supplies.

Market sentiment weakened after Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi stated that Tehran had no trust in the United States and would engage in negotiations only if Washington demonstrated genuine commitment. He also indicated that Iran remained ready for both renewed military conflict and diplomatic talks, signalling continued uncertainty over the future of regional stability.

The latest remarks came as US President Donald Trump expressed frustration over Iran's stance and reiterated that Tehran must not be allowed to develop nuclear weapons.

Trump also called for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical shipping passage through which nearly one-fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas supplies are transported.

The Strait of Hormuz remains strategically important for major Gulf oil producers such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Qatar. Any disruption in shipping activity through the narrow waterway is considered a serious threat to global energy markets and international trade.

Investors had initially hoped that the ceasefire involving Iran and regional rivals would lead to smoother maritime operations and improved stability in the Gulf region. However, renewed tensions and strong statements from both Washington and Tehran have significantly reduced expectations of a quick resolution.

During his visit to China, Trump also said he had agreed with Chinese President Xi Jinping that Iran should not possess nuclear weapons. The statement added another geopolitical dimension to the ongoing crisis, further intensifying concerns among global investors and energy traders.

'Small offices face highest facility management costs'

MUMBAI

Cities such as Mumbai, Bengaluru and Gurugram recorded the highest costs across small office categories due to premium Grade A office ecosystems.

Small office occupiers across India are bearing the highest facilities management costs per square foot, while larger office campuses are benefiting from scale efficiencies and integrated infrastructure, according to a report released by Knight Frank India on Saturday.

The report found that smaller office spaces, including startup hubs, boutique corporate offices, flexible workspace occupiers and regional business units, continue to face elevated facilities management expenses due to limited operational scale and higher manpower requirements per square foot.

According to the study, cities such as Mumbai, Bengaluru and Gurugram recorded the highest costs across small office categories because of premium Grade A office ecosystems, higher employee-related expenses and strong demand for integrated workplace management services.

In contrast, Pune and Kolkata emerged as the most cost-efficient office markets for small occupiers. Facilities management costs in these cities ranged between Rs 21.13 and Rs 24.55 per square foot across different operational formats, making them comparatively affordable for businesses looking to optimise operational expenditure.

The report also underlined the importance of operating formats in determining workplace management costs. Offices functioning on a 24x7 basis consistently incurred higher expenses compared to conventional 12-hour, five-day operational models. This increase was attributed to additional manpower deployment, engineering support, continuous maintenance requirements and round-the-clock security services.

Pawan Koyal, Executive Director and Head of Facility and Asset Management at Knight Frank India, said facilities management has evolved into a strategic business function as companies increasingly focus on operational continuity, workplace experience, sustainability and employee wellbeing.

He added that gateway office markets such as Mumbai, Bengaluru and Gurugram continue to command a premium due to higher workforce costs and rising demand for advanced workplace management solutions.

The report stated that within the 10,000 to 30,000 square foot office category, facilities management costs in Mumbai, Bengaluru and Gurugram stood at Rs 25.52 per square foot for 12-hour operations. These costs increased to Rs 27.52 per square foot for offices operating round the clock.

Similarly, offices in the 30,000 to 50,000 square foot category recorded some of the highest operational expenses across segments, with costs reaching Rs 27.65 per square foot for 12-hour operations and Rs 29.65 per square foot for 24x7 operational models.

Govt develops framework to measure contribution of knowledge to economy

NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is developing a new framework to assess the contribution of knowledge and knowledge-based products to the Indian economy, according to an official statement released on Saturday.

The initiative aims to better understand the growing role of knowledge-driven activities in economic growth amid rapid technological advancements and changing workforce requirements.

The ministry stated that the framework is being designed in response to increasing technological transformation and the rising complexity of skill demands across industries. Officials noted that measuring the economic value generated through knowledge systems, innovation and intellectual outputs has become essential for policymaking and economic planning.

According to the statement, the exercise seeks to address the growing importance of knowledge in economic activity and support the formulation of policies capable of capturing evolving economic dynamics. The ministry described the effort as a first-of-its-kind initiative in India due to the absence of a comparable global precedent.

The statement further said that the project requires collaboration with experts and stakeholders from multiple sectors because of the complexity involved in defining and quantifying knowledge products and their economic contribution.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation constituted a Technical Advisory Group following recommendations from a meeting chaired by Ajay Kumar Sood. The advisory group was tasked with developing a structured approach for measuring the contribution of knowledge-related sectors to the country's gross domestic product.

In September 2025, the ministry organised a brainstorming workshop to help create a taxonomy of knowledge products and identify quantitative indicators and relevant data sources for evaluating their economic value. Experts participating in the discussions also explored challenges related to measurement methodologies and data availability.

Based on recommendations from the Technical Advisory Group, suggestions received during the workshop and subsequent consultations, the ministry has now prepared a base paper outlining a proposed framework for measuring the contribution of knowledge and knowledge products to the Indian economy.

The document consists of four chapters covering conceptual aspects of knowledge and the knowledge economy, existing methodologies and metrics, the dimensions and challenges of India's traditional knowledge systems, and a framework for evaluating the economic value of knowledge contributions. The ministry has invited comments and suggestions from stakeholders and the general public as part of a broader consultation process. Feedback can be submitted to the ministry until June 15, 2026, after which the framework is expected to be finalised.

TN gets MeitY-backed ChipIN Centre

NEW DELHI

A MeitY-backed ChipIN Centre focused on semiconductor design education and VLSI research has been inaugurated at Sona College of Technology on Saturday to strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem and chip design capabilities.

The 'Sona ChipIN Centre', established at the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE), has been set up under the Chips to Startup (C2S) programme supported by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), C-DAC and the ChipIN Centre initiative.

The facility is equipped with advanced Electronic Design Automation (EDA) tools valued at Rs 100 million, enabling students, researchers and faculty members to work on semiconductor design, VLSI research and industry-oriented innovation projects. The centre was inaugurated by Dr V Veerappan, Chairman of the India Electronics and Semiconductor Association, and Shekar Viswanathan, former Vice-Chairman of Toyota Kirloskar Motor.Sona Institutions Chairman C Valliappa said the Centre should work towards developing a 'Made in India' chip within the next 24-36 months in alignment with the government's India Semiconductor Mission.

Meanwhile, Sona Institutions Vice Chairman Chocko Valliappa said the initiative assumes significance amid India's rapidly growing semiconductor ecosystem and the country's entry into advanced 3nm chip development capabilities.

He added that apart from indigenous chip development, the centre will help produce industry-ready semiconductor engineers. According to the institution, the ECE Department will utilise the facility to train students across multiple programmes, including Electronics and Communication Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering.

TCS scales up 'Human+AI' strategy amid enterprise AI push

NEW DELHI

India's leading software services provider, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), is repositioning itself as an AI and digital transformation partner as it sharpens focus on full-stack artificial intelligence solutions across industries, Chairman N Chandrasekaran has said.

In a message to shareholders in the company's FY26 annual report, Chandrasekaran said enterprises are rapidly accelerating adoption of generative and agentic AI technologies.

TCS also scaled up execution of its 'Human + AI' operating model and expanded its industry-specific agent marketplace during the fiscal year, he noted.

According to Chandrasekaran, AI is evolving from being merely a technology layer to becoming the infrastructure of intelligence for businesses.

He said enterprises are expected to increasingly move from AI pilot projects to large-scale deployment, embedding AI into core business operations, supply chains and decision-making processes.

TCS generated annualised revenue of $2.3 billion from AI services during FY26, while its new-age services portfolio -- including cloud, data, enterprise solutions and cyber security -- contributed $11.5 billion in annualised revenue.

The company reported total revenue of $30 billion for FY26 and secured deal wins with a total contract value of $40.7 billion during the year.

During FY26, TCS expanded into the data centre business and acquired firms to strengthen capabilities linked to AI infrastructure and adjacent technologies.

The company recently launched 'HyperVault', an AI infrastructure platform developed in partnership with TPG.

Chandrasekaran said India is emerging as a strategic alternative destination for AI infrastructure amid rising global constraints related to power, computing capacity and geography.

TCS is building what it claims will be India's first AI-focused high-density data centre, with rack density exceeding 160 KW.

Fuel price rise likely provides Rs 52,700 cr relief to OMCs

NEW DELHI

The recent retail fuel price increase of Rs 3 per litre will trim mounting losses at oil marketing companies and provide up to Rs 52,700 crore worth of relief in their under recoveries, a report said on Saturday.

The report from SBI Research said that the relief is equal to roughly 15 per cent of the expected total loss of OMCs in FY27.

Under recoveries on petrol and diesel have surged because retail prices were kept unchanged amid rising Brent crude, with the government estimating OMC losses at about Rs 1,000 crore per day and roughly Rs 3.6 lakh crore a year. The report said the fuel price hike is unlikely to reduce annual oil consumption, as historical patterns showed consumption dips immediately after price hikes but recovers over the year.

Further, immediate impact on CPI inflation is likely around 15-20 bps in May-June 2026. So, we revise our FY27 forecast to 4.7 per cent. There is no direct impact of this hike on the fiscal situation, the report noted.

Notably, the government has earlier reduced the excise duty by Rs 10 on diesel and petrol during the year to help.

The OMCs for which the revenue loss for the centre is estimated as Rs 1.1 lakh crore. A similar rationalisation of excise to zero to aid OMCs would cost the centre about Rs 1.9 lakh crore and states about Rs 80,000 crore.

The report flagged that a further depreciation of the rupee could negate the intended benefits, saying that an additional depreciation of Rs 2 from the FY27 average of Rs 94 to the dollar would fully offset the gains from the domestic fuel price revision.

The rupee has already approached a critical depreciation threshold, beyond which further currency weakness could substantially erode the intended benefits of domestic fuel price revisions, it explained.

NORM VIOLATIONS

TATA TRUSTS ASKED TO DEFER MEETING AMID PROBE

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra State Charity Commissioner has directed Tata Trusts to defer a crucial board meeting of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust following complaints related to the composition of its board of trustees.

The order comes amid an ongoing inquiry into alleged violations linked to trustee appointments and governance norms. In an official statement, Tata Trusts clarified that the directive issued by the Office of the Charity Commissioner applies only to the Sir Ratan Tata Trust and described the order as ex parte in nature.

The trust stated that the directions received from the Office of the Charity Commissioner are currently being examined by the Sir Ratan Tata Trust. It further noted that the order had been issued without prior notice or an opportunity for the trust to present its position before the authorities. The board meeting, scheduled for Saturday, was

considered significant due to expected discussions concerning Tata Sons, including a possible public listing of the company, the reappointment of Chairman N Chandrasekaran and other nominee directors. The meeting had originally been planned for May 8 before being postponed to May 16.

Maharashtra Charity Commissioner Amogh S Kaloti confirmed that an inquiry is underway after complaints were filed regarding the composition of the board of trustees of the Sir Ratan Tata Trust.

The order also instructed the trust not to conduct such meetings until the inspector's inquiry report is submitted. Advocate Katyayani Agrawal, who sought intervention from the Charity Commissioner, said the office had directed Tata Trusts to defer all future board meetings pending completion of the inquiry. She added that an inspector appointed in the matter would investigate the allegations and submit a detailed report to the Charity Commissioner. Agrawal had approached the authorities on April 18.

The issue is linked to an amended provision introduced in September 2025, which limits the number of perpetual or lifetime trustees to 25 per cent of the total strength of the board. Authorities are reportedly examining whether the current structure complies with the revised rules.

The Sir Ratan Tata Trust holds a 23.6 per cent stake in Tata Sons, the holding company of the over 180 billion dollar Tata Group, making governance matters concerning the trust highly significant for the broader business conglomerate.

Lucknow wins big despite captain's over-rate fine

Lucknow captain Rishabh Pant was fined ₹12 lakh for a slow over-rate during his team's spectacular win over Chennai

LUCKNOW

Lucknow Super Giants captain Rishabh Pant has been fined ₹12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League match against Chennai Super Kings. The strict disciplinary sanction was officially announced by the league authorities following the conclusion of the highly intense clash at the Ekana Stadium.

According to an official statement, the financial penalty was imposed under Article 2.22 of the IPL Code of Conduct. Because this represented Lucknow's very first minimum over-rate offence of the ongoing tournament, the penalty remained restricted to a baseline fine for the skipper rather than drawing harsher team suspensions.

The disciplinary dampener was the only negative takeaway for the home side on an otherwise spectacular night. Riding on an incredible bowling spell by Akash Singh, who dismantled the top order with a fantastic three-wicket haul, Lucknow managed to restrict Chennai to a competitive score of 187. For Chennai, young batter Kartik Sharma anchored the innings beautifully with a career-best score of 71, while Shivam Dube provided late acceleration.

Lucknow's chase turned into an absolute masterclass as opening batsmen Mitchell Marsh and Josh Inglis put together a massive 135-run partnership. Marsh played a scintillating knock, smashing a brutal 90 runs off just 38 balls before an unfortunate run-out cut his dream innings short. Following a minor middle-order stumble, power-hitter Nicholas Pooran arrived to smash a rapid 32 off 17 balls, comfortably sealing a thumping seven-wicket victory with 20 balls to spare.

Hard work drives pacer Akash Singh's success

Left-arm pacer Akash Singh credits self-belief for his match-winning 3-26 spell, which helped Lucknow Super Giants crush Chennai Super Kings by seven wickets

LUCKNOW

Lucknow Super Giants' young left-arm pacer Akash Singh has opened up about his stellar performance, stating that hard work and absolute self-belief are the main secrets behind his match-winning capabilities. The youngster made an unforgettable impact during Lucknow's dominant seven-wicket triumph over Chennai Super Kings at the Ekana Stadium.

Playing his very first match of the season, Akash dismantled Chennai's powerful top order with spectacular bowling figures of 3-26. He dismissed top batsmen Ruturaj Gaikwad, Sanju Samson, and Urvil Patel early on a challenging red-soil track. Reflecting on his success in a post-match interview, Akash explained that he actively motivates himself during high-pressure scenarios, ensuring he stays mentally prepared to seize any opportunity that comes his way.

The pacer also explained his unique, viral "#AkiOnFire" celebration, which involved pulling a handwritten note out of his pocket after taking each wicket. He revealed the note read, "Akki knows how to take wickets in T20 cricket," describing it as a personal tool for self-motivation and supreme confidence rather than any hidden statement.

Akash's initial bowling burst effectively restricted Chennai to 187 runs despite a fighting half-century from Kartik Sharma. Lucknow then chased down the target effortlessly in just 16.4 overs, courtesy of an aggressive 90-run blast from Mitchell Marsh and finishing fireworks from Nicholas Pooran. Head coach Justin Langer highly praised Akash after the victory, calling him an exceptionally professional player who thoroughly deserved his big moment.

Mark Boucher praises Mitchell Marsh's blitzing innings

NEW DELHI

Former South African wicketkeeper-batsman Mark Boucher has highly praised Australian all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, describing his recent destructive knock against Chennai Super Kings as an absolute batting masterclass. Marsh's extraordinary power-hitting helped Lucknow Super Giants chase down a competitive target of 188 runs in just 16.4 overs, securing an emphatic seven-wicket victory.

Speaking on an interview, Boucher pointed out that the hard pitch conditions at the Ekana Stadium perfectly suited the visiting Australian batsmen. He shared that both Marsh and opening partner Josh Inglis felt the bouncy surface heavily resembled their familiar home ground in Perth. According to Boucher, Marsh skillfully used the heavy pace and true bounce of the pitch to play cross-batted shots square of the wicket, completely outsmarting Chennai's short-pitched bowling strategy.

The legendary wicketkeeper suggested that Lucknow should continue preparing fast, bouncy home tracks for future matches. He noted that their squad, featuring overseas stars like Mitchell Marsh, Josh Inglis, and Aiden Markram, naturally thrives under these specific conditions.

He added that Lucknow also possesses an excellent pace battery capable of extracting maximum help from such hard tracks.

Marsh's rapid ninety off thirty-eight balls, combined with a record 135-run opening stand with Inglis, completely dismantled Chennai's bowling line-up. Despite strong fighting knocks from Chennai's Kartik Sharma and Shivam Dube, Marsh's explosive onslaught comfortably dragged the game away from the defending champions, severely denting their immediate playoff qualification hopes for the season.

Shastri backs young Anhul Kamboj after tough game

NEW DELHI

Former Indian all-rounder and head coach Ravi Shastri has strongly backed young Chennai Super Kings pacer Anshul Kamboj after his exceptionally difficult bowling outing against Lucknow Super Giants. Shastri firmly believes the twenty-five-year-old fast bowler will gain massive technical maturity from his mistakes and return as a significantly stronger competitor.

Kamboj endured a highly punishing day on the field as opening batsman Mitchell Marsh aggressively dismantled his bowling, smashing four consecutive sixes in a single over. The young pacer ultimately finished with highly expensive figures, conceding sixty-three runs in just 2.4 overs as Lucknow effortlessly chased down the 188-run target in 16.4 overs.

Analyzing the performance, Shastri suggested that Kamboj should have quickly abandoned short-of-a-length deliveries once Marsh began attacking. He pointed out that power-hitters raised on fast, bouncy Australian pitches easily punish waist-high short balls. Instead, the veteran commentator advised that the youngster should have focused heavily on executing precise yorkers aimed directly at the base of the stumps.

Despite the painful defeat, Shastri urged Chennai to focus on the positives, noting that scoring 187 runs on a highly challenging pitch was a commendable effort. He emphasized that once key batsmen Sanju Samson and Ruturaj Gaikwad regain their peak form, the franchise will look incredibly formidable. With Chennai currently slipping to the sixth position, the legendary cricketer dismissed the setback as a valuable learning experience before their must-win clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Rajasthan Royals look to maximize powerplay overs

NEW DELHI

A rejuvenated Rajasthan Royals (RR) will lock horns with Delhi Capitals (DC) in a high-stakes, must-win Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 clash at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. Rajasthan, who recently slipped to the fifth spot after a string of defeats, are desperate to arrest their second-half slump and solidify their playoff ambitions.

The Riyan Parag-led Rajasthan squad will lean heavily on their explosive teenage opening batsman, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, to maximize the powerplay overs. Sooryavanshi has enjoyed an exceptional tournament so far, amassing 440 runs at a staggering strike rate of 237. His primary challenge will be surviving a fierce opening spell against Delhi's pace spearhead Mitchell Starc, who previously dismantled Rajasthan's top order in their reverse fixture. Concurrently, opening partner Yashasvi Jaiswal will look to rediscover his missing form after a string of low scores against short-pitched bowling.

Delhi Capitals find themselves in an equally desperate situation under the leadership of captain Axar Patel. Carrying the worst net run rate among the top contenders, a defeat will officially end Delhi's campaign. The home side's batting hopes rest squarely on the shoulders of veteran batsman KL Rahul, who boasts an incredible career average of 51.6 against Rajasthan. Rahul is set for an intense individual battle against England speedster Jofra Archer, who has dismissed him three times in past T20 encounters.

While Delhi boasts reliable finishers in David Miller and Ashutosh Sharma, their top-order inconsistency has haunted them throughout their dismal home run, which includes five successive defeats in New Delhi. For Rajasthan, power-hitter Donovan Ferreira remains their go-to weapon in the death overs, though they urgently need their middle order comprising Parag and Shimron Hetmyer to fire collectively.

Virat Kohli praises WPL's impact on Cricket

NEW DELHI

Indian cricket icon Virat Kohli has praised the Women's Premier League (WPL), stating that the tournament has completely transformed women's cricket in India. Kohli highlighted how the league fast-tracks young talent by exposing them to high-pressure situations against the world's best players.

Kohli expressed amazement at the massive crowd turnouts in cities like Bangalore, Baroda, and Navi Mumbai. According to him, packed stadiums prove that fans are no longer watching just out of curiosity, but because they genuinely love the high quality of the game. He noted that the overall standard of cricket has reached a whole new level.

The veteran batter specifically lauded young power-hitters like Shafali Verma and Richa Ghosh. Recalling the T20 World Cup in Australia, Kohli mentioned being stunned by Shafali's effortless ability to hit big sixes into the stands. He also compared Richa to top-tier global finishers, praising her incredible confidence and explosive skills.

Before the WPL, Indian players had to wait for months between international series to face elite overseas stars. Now, they share dressing rooms and compete against them regularly. Kohli explained that this intense environment brings the best players to the surface much faster than before.

Thanks to this constant exposure, Kohli concluded that cricketers emerging from the WPL and IPL are no longer raw talents. Instead, they transition to the international stage as complete, "ready products" who are fully prepared to handle any pressure.

ICC freezes Cricket Canada funding over issues

DUBAI

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has suspended all financial funding to Cricket Canada for the next six months. This sudden penalty comes after serious concerns arose regarding how the sports organization is being managed and governed.

The decision is a massive financial blow to the Canadian cricket board, which relies heavily on outside help. Official records show that ICC grants previously made up nearly 63 percent of Cricket Canada's total income, bringing in millions of dollars annually. Fortunately, officials confirmed that this freeze will not stop current player training or immediate national team matches.

While the ICC did not share specific details, the move follows a very messy year for Canadian cricket. Investigative reports recently exposed deep administrative and financial issues. Currently, the ICC Anti-Corruption Unit is investigating a World Cup match between Canada and New Zealand. Additionally, a leaked phone recording alleged that former board members illegally pressured the national coach to pick specific players. Adding to the chaos, the board's former CEO was recently fired and now faces police charges for theft and fraud. In response to the crisis, Cricket Canada recently elected a new president, Arvinder Khosa, alongside a fresh board of directors.

MUENSTER

Four-time Formula One world champion Max Verstappen enjoyed a stellar start to his highly anticipated endurance racing debut. His Verstappen Racing team secured fourth place on the starting grid for the iconic 24 Hours of Nuerburgring.

Spanish co-driver Dani Juncadella produced a blazing final lap of eight minutes 12.005 seconds over the fearsome 25-kilometer German track. Famously nicknamed "The Green Hell," the challenging circuit tested drivers with complex corners and rapidly shifting grip levels. Top honors went to the Red Bull-backed Team ABT Lamborghini, with German driver Luca Engstler taking pole position with a time of 8:11.123.

Verstappen expressed great satisfaction with his car's performance after clocking the sixth-fastest time during the second knockout stage. He noted that advancing through the intense qualifying sessions against a field of fast cars was a massive achievement. The Dutch superstar takes advantage of an F1 weekend break to fulfill this "bucket-list" ambition, sharing his Mercedes-AMG GT3 with teammates Juncadella, Jules Gounon, and Lucas Auer.

The global racing icon's presence has sparked unprecedented excitement, triggering the first complete ticket sell-out in the history of the event. A massive grid of 161 cars across 23 different classes is set to compete. The ultimate test of stamina begins on Saturday afternoon at 15:00 local time, as Verstappen's squad sets its sights on victory.

Kohli very proud of Jemimah's special knock

NEW DELHI

Cricket legend Virat Kohli has lauded Indian women cricket stars Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues for their match-winning performances. Kohli compared their iconic innings, crowning Rodrigues' World Cup semifinal century against Australia as the "more special" of the two.

Kohli first praised Mandhana for leading Royal Challengers Bengaluru to their second WPL title. Despite battling a severe flu, Mandhana smashed a brilliant 87 off 41 balls against Delhi Capitals to pull off a record chase of 204. Kohli described her as a gifted, natural timer of the ball who makes tough shots look effortless, even under immense pressure.

However, Kohli admitted that Rodrigues' unbeaten 127 against Australia in the World Cup semifinal held higher emotional value. Chasing a massive target of 338 in Mumbai, Rodrigues stitched a crucial 167-run partnership with captain Harmanpreet Kaur to script cricket history.

Kohli highlighted Rodrigues' incredible mental strength and resilience, especially after a tough tournament. He noted that she looked completely "zoned out" in her own world, entirely unfazed by the world-champion opposition or the pressure of a record chase in front of her home crowd and parents.

Marathon star Sawan Barwal shares inspiring journey

Himachal Pradesh athlete Sawan Barwal shattered India's 48-year-old national marathon record through high-altitude training and immense family sacrifice

NEW DELHI

Indian long-distance runner Sawan Barwal has opened up about his incredible transformation from a small-town boy to a national record-breaker. Hailing from the serene hills of Joginder Nagar in Himachal Pradesh, the soft-spoken Army athlete recently made history by shattering India's forty-eight-year-old national marathon record.

In an exclusive interaction, Barwal explained that growing up in high-altitude mountains naturally developed his physical endurance and structural stamina from a very early age. However, starting his career in a remote region came with severe challenges. Unlike city athletes, he lacked professional training centres, advanced recovery systems, or nutritional guidance. Despite these heavy limitations, his unwavering focus and intense training sessions helped him secure medals at the National level before moving to advanced training centres.

Behind his disciplined routine lies a moving story of immense family sacrifice. Barwal fondly recalled how his family willingly cut down on their own personal needs to support his athletic dreams. Specifically, his elder brother provided crucial financial assistance to buy expensive, high-performance training and competition shoes when Barwal was still unemployed and struggling.

Looking ahead, Barwal is highly focused on the upcoming Asian Games, the Asian Marathon Championship, and the Los Angeles Olympics. Having transitioned smoothly from shorter track events to the grueling forty-two-kilometer marathon format, he believes mental resilience and racing experience are vital for global success. He advised young, upcoming runners to remain exceptionally patient during their transition to the senior level, emphasizing that consistent hard work always brings fruitful results.

Aryaveer Dewan to lead India squash contingent

NEW DELHI

Talented player Aryaveer Dewan is set to lead a powerful Indian contingent at the upcoming Asian Junior Individual Squash Championships. The highly anticipated continental tournament is scheduled to take place in Panzhihua, China, running from May 20 to May 24.

Dewan, who brilliantly secured the boys' under-seventeen title during the previous edition, has moved up to the competitive under-nineteen category this season. Entering the high-profile tournament as the third seed, he stands at the forefront of a strong thirty-two-member national squad. The diverse team features promising athletes competing across multiple age categories, spanning from under-eleven to under-nineteen divisions.

India enjoyed a highly successful campaign during the last edition of the championships, returning home with an impressive haul of seven medals, which included two gold, two silver, and three bronze. This year, with several players securing strong seeding positions, the contingent is highly optimistic about bettering that performance on Chinese soil.

In the boys' group, Shresht Iyer holds the second seed in the under-fifteen division, while Abhyuday Arora and Amarya Bajaj carry hopes in the under-thirteen section. The girls' squad looks equally formidable, with the talented Divyanshi Jain entering the under-thirteen draw as the second seed. Alongside them, promising players like Aadya Budhia and Anika Dubey are well-placed to challenge for top honors. Guided by a dedicated group of coaches and officials, this blend of experienced juniors and rising talent aims to make a memorable impact at Asia's premier youth squash event.

Joshna and Velavan shine in squash championships

CHENNAI

Velavan Senthilkumar and Joshna Chinappa emerged as the biggest winners at the 3rd National Doubles Squash Championships in Chennai. The top-seeded pair won the mixed doubles title after defeating Abhay Singh and Rathika Seelan in straight games. Earlier, Velavan partnered with Abhay Singh to claim the men's doubles crown for the third consecutive year. Joshna and Rathika also secured the women's doubles title with a comfortable victory in the final. The tournament saw dominant performances from the leading players, who impressed with strong teamwork, quick movement, and attacking play throughout the championship at the Indian Squash Academy.

Hockey India acts after misconduct allegations surface

Hockey India removed support staff member Sudhir Golla from the ongoing sub-junior men's national camp in Bhopal after serious allegations of sexual misconduct surfaced against him. Complaints filed in Jharkhand accused him of neglecting duties and behaving inappropriately with girl trainees at the Eklavya Hockey Training Centre in Ranchi. Authorities immediately replaced him with a woman coach. Hockey India said player safety remains its top priority and promised a secure environment for young athletes. The incident is the fourth safeguarding controversy in Indian hockey within six months, raising concerns over the federation's reputation and internal monitoring systems nationwide.

Salima Tete confident ahead of Australia tour

NEW DELHI

Indian women's hockey team captain Salima Tete has declared that her squad is physically and mentally well-prepared to handle high-stakes pressure ahead of their upcoming tour of Australia. The national team is currently undergoing an intensive, rigorous training camp at the Sports Authority of India centre in Bengaluru to fine-tune their tactical skills.

Speaking about the demanding tour, Tete emphasized that the powerful Australian team represents a formidable opponent, which will guarantee highly competitive matches. The skipper explained that the intense series serves as a critical stepping stone to build momentum for massive upcoming global tournaments, including the FIH Nations Cup, the World Cup, and the highly anticipated Asian Games.

Fitness has emerged as the absolute core of India's preparation. Tete highlighted that every individual, including young junior players, is working incredibly hard to elevate physical standards. She noted that superior fitness is essential to dismantle top-tier teams on the international stage.

Reflecting on their previous competitive exposure in Argentina last April, the captain stated that playing against world-class teams has drastically helped evaluate squad depth. It successfully allowed next-generation talent to integrate smoothly into the senior setup. The team will officially travel to Australia for a four-match series at the Perth Hockey Stadium from May 21 to June 3. Tete concluded that despite the external pressure of matching global benchmarks, the team remains highly disciplined and fully committed to executing their coach's strategic blueprints flawlessly.

SATWIK-CHIRAG STORM INTO THAILAND OPEN FINAL

BANGKOK

India's favorite badminton duo, Satwik Sai Raj Ranki reddy and Chirag Shetty, storm first final of the 2026 season. The world number four pair treated fans to a thrilling semifinal victory at the Thailand Open.

The top-seeded Indians faced a fierce challenge from Malaysia's Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin. In a gripping match that lasted one hour and 22 minutes, Satwik and Chirag showed incredible grit to win 19-21, 22-20, 21-16. With other Indian stars already out of the tournament, the pressure was squarely on their shoulders, but they handled it beautifully.

The match started tough. Early miscommunications cost the Indians the first game. However, they bounced back dramatically in the second. After fighting tooth and nail, a breathtaking rally at a 20-20 tie allowed Satwik to seal the game with a brilliant shot.

With the momentum shifting in their favor, the Indian pair dominated the final game. They controlled the court with aggressive plays and smart defense, leaving the Malaysian team with no answers. This victory extends Satwik and Chirag's impressive head-to-head record against the Malaysians to 8-2.

The duo is now just one step away from reclaiming the Thailand Open title, which they last won in 2024. Standing in their way during Sunday's grand finale will be either Indonesia's Leo Rolly Carnando and Daniel Marthin or China's He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu. Indian fans will certainly be glued to their screens.

Rain delays Jannik Sinner's historic Rome final

ROME

World number one Jannik Sinner stands on the verge of tennis history, but heavy rain has temporarily halted his Italian Open semifinal clash against Daniil Medvedev.

The top-seeded Italian was leading the thrilling match 6-2, 5-7, 4-2 at the Foro Italico when officials suspended play in the last match. Sinner completely dominated the opening set with his aggressive baseline play before Medvedev fought back tenaciously to claim the second set. However, the 24-year-old home favorite quickly regained momentum in the deciding set, breaking serve early to command a 4-2 lead just before the downpour started.

If Sinner completes the victory when the match resumes today, he will face Casper Ruud in Sunday's final. Ruud easily cruised into the championship match by defeating Luciano Darderi 6-1, 6-1.

A tournament victory on home soil would cement Sinner's name in the record books. He is aiming to become the first Italian man to win Rome's prestigious title in 50 years, matching Adriano Panatta's legendary 1976 triumph. Furthermore, lifting the trophy would secure Sinner a career "Golden Masters" by winning all nine ATP Masters 1000 events, a milestone previously reached only by Novak Djokovic.

Sinner is currently enjoying an incredible career run, holding four Grand Slam titles and an unprecedented 32-match winning streak at the Masters 1000 level. Passionate local fans are now waiting anxiously for the storm to clear, hoping their modern icon can rewrite Italian sporting history.

Shikha Yadav shocked by historic Rugby bid

NEW DELHI

Indian women's rugby team captain Shikha Yadav has expressed her absolute delight after becoming the highest-paid domestic female player at the recent Rugby Premier League (RPL) Season 2 auction.

The star athlete admitted that emerging as the top draft pick was an incredibly special yet completely unexpected shock. Representing a massive financial milestone for women's sports in India, the Delhi-based player was secured by the Delhi Redz franchise for a record-breaking sum of Rs 2.4 lakh.

This upcoming season marks a historic evolution for the RPL, which has officially expanded to include dedicated women's franchises for the first time. The highly anticipated tournament is scheduled to run from June 16 to 28 at the iconic Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, featuring elite global talent playing alongside emerging Indian youth.

Yadav, a versatile 27-year-old athlete who transitioned to rugby after playing athletics, volleyball, and throwball, believes this corporate backing will permanently revolutionize the local sports ecosystem. She highlighted that playing shoulder-to-shoulder with international Olympians will provide invaluable exposure, mirroring the progress that recently helped the national team qualify for the Asian Games.

Corporate powerhouses like GMR Sports and Rugby India are driving this infrastructure transformation, creating professional career pathways that did not exist previously. With proper funding, modern training facilities, and increased media visibility now secured, Yadav remains highly optimistic about the future, noting that Indian women's rugby is finally poised to take the global stage by storm.

Aditi Ashok misses cut in Cincinnati championship

CINCINNATI

Talented Indian golfer Aditi Ashok suffered an early exit at the Kroger Queen City Championship, narrowly missing the weekend cut after a challenging second round.

The Indian sports star carded a 1-over par 71 on the second day of the prestigious tournament. When combined with her disappointing 2-over par performance during the opening round, Aditi finished with a two-day total score of 3-over par. Unfortunately, with the tournament's competitive weekend cut-off line strictly set at 2-over par, she missed out on advancing by just a single stroke. It was a heartbreaking end for the Olympian, who struggled to find her usual consistency on the greens.

Meanwhile, at the top of the leaderboard, the battle intensified as American golfer Amanda Doherty and South Korea's Jin Young Ko surged ahead to become joint leaders. Both elite players showcased flawless form, carding matching rounds of 4-under par 66. Their spectacular performance pushed their total score to an impressive 7-under par heading into the crucial weekend rounds.

TEN-MAN NITA FA DEFY ODDS IN IWL

KOLKATA

A ten-player Nita FA produced an incredibly spirited performance to secure a thrilling 3-2 victory over SESA Football Academy in the Indian Women's League (IWL) 2025-26.

The heroic triumph topped an action-packed matchday that saw multiple dramatic finishes across the city. Nita FA suffered a massive early blow when forward Neha received a straight red card in the 29th minute. Despite the numerical disadvantage, skipper Pyari Xaxa broke the deadlock before Sussana Konadu curled in a spectacular free-kick. SESA fought back fiercely via Maurine Achieng and Arpita Pednekar, but a powerful 90th-minute header from Cindy Colney sealed the unforgettable win for Nita.

Meanwhile, newly crowned champions East Bengal FC continued their absolute dominance with a resounding 5-0 victory over Garhwal United. Striker Soumya Guguloth and star signing Fazila Ikwaput both netted superb braces, while Naorem Devi chipped in to complete the blowout after a lengthy weather delay.

At the National Centre of Excellence, Sribhumi FC and Kickstart FC played out an entertaining 2-2 draw. Legend Bala Devi scored a penalty and assisted Veronica Appiah to give Sribhumi a comfortable cushion. However, Kickstart launched a spirited second-half comeback, equalizing through Mariyammal Balamurugan after Emem Essien's initial strike.

Lastly, heavy rain spoiled a highly anticipated heavyweight clash between Gokulam Kerala FC and Sethu Madurai.

Michael Carrick nears two-year Man United contract

LONDON

Manchester United are edging closer to appointing former midfielder Michael Carrick as their permanent head coach following positive talks over a two-year contract.

Carrick stepped up on an interim basis in January after Ruben Amorim's departure. He quickly turned the turbulent season around, guiding the Red Devils back into the UEFA Champions League. Having secured 10 victories in 15 games, Carrick has earned immense respect from senior figures at Old Trafford. His representatives met with club officials this week to finalize a deal that includes a further one-year extension option. The official announcement could come before Sunday's final home match against Nottingham Forest.

Meanwhile, across Europe, legendary goalkeeper Manuel Neuer has signed a one-year contract extension with Bayern Munich. The 40-year-old captain will remain with the German powerhouse until June 2027.

SURIYA SHINES AS new film wins hearts

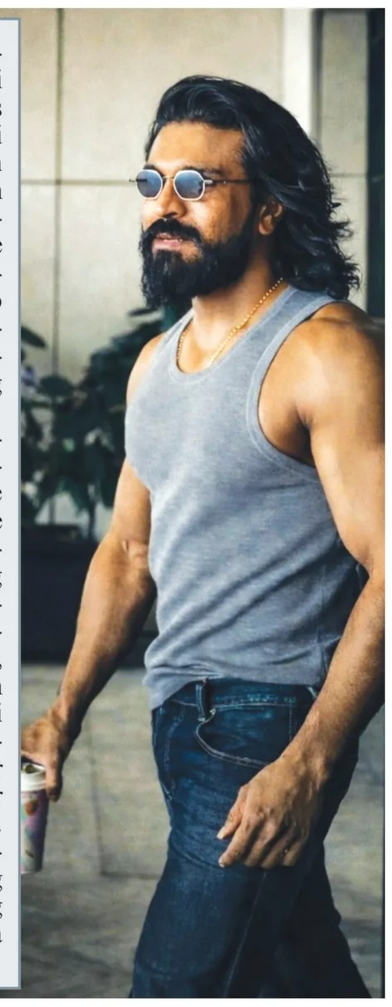
A wave of celebration is sweeping through the film industry as the latest movie, Karuppu released as Veerabhadrudu in Telugu, is turning out to be a massive hit. The movie has sparked huge excitement among audiences, creating a lively atmosphere inside cinema halls.

Film lovers and industry insiders are praising the project, calling it a highly deserved victory for the entire creative team. Leading star Suriya is receiving immense love for his hard work and unforgettable acting.

Fans are pointing out how his incredible charm and dedication always bring something extra special to the big screen, making this project a true visual treat.

The film's joyful reception is a massive win for director RJ Balaji and actress Trisha Krishnan, who are both getting special recognition for their brilliant contributions to the story. The energetic crowds and glowing reviews have added a major spark to the movie's theatrical run. Joining the celebration, popular actor Vijay Deverakonda openly gave his backing to Veerabhadrudu and showed strong support for Suriya. This warm gesture from a fellow star has made the victory even sweeter for the cast. As the film continues to draw large crowds, sweet congratulatory messages are pouring in from all corners of the entertainment world. Fans are wishing the cast and crew great success for the rest of the theatrical run, hoping the team can finally take a relaxing and well-earned break after delivering such an incredible cinematic experience.

RAM CHARAN was always the only choice: Buchi Babu Sana



In an emotional revelation, filmmaker Buchi Babu Sana shared that his upcoming movie Peddi was created solely with global star Ram Charan in mind. The director confessed that the unique idea for this highly anticipated project came to him long before his successful first movie, Uppena, even hit the big screens.

Reflecting on those early days, Buchi Babu recalled a time when the team was weighing the option of releasing Uppena directly on streaming platforms. During a casual chat, his mentor, veteran filmmaker Sukumar, asked if he had any fresh concepts in mind. Buchi Babu shared a simple storyline, which Sukumar immediately praised for being completely original.

Inspired, the young director began developing the script while visiting the peaceful Dattathreya temple in Pithapuram.

Drake shatters records with surprise triple album

Canadian rap superstar Drake has completely rewritten music history by shattering multiple global streaming records.

The monumental achievement followed an unexpected triple-album drop, instantly igniting massive excitement among music fans worldwide. The music giant Spotify officially confirmed that the Toronto-born artist has become the platform's most-streamed musician in a single day for the year 2026.

His highly anticipated album, Iceman, secured the title for the most-streamed album in a single day, while its emotional opening track, "Make Them Cry," comfortably claimed the crown for the most-streamed song of the year so far.This historic milestone unfolded during Drake's live-streamed broadcast, where he stunned listeners by simultaneously rolling out three distinct studio projects like Iceman, Maid of Honour, and Habibti.

Together, the massive surprise drop delivered forty-three brand-new tracks, representing his first major solo material since his successful 2023 record.

Drishyam 3 will have two different stories

In an exciting update for cinema lovers, the creators of the hit Drishyam franchise have revealed that the upcoming third installments in Malayalam and Hindi will feature completely different narratives. Producers Abhishek Pathak and Kumar Mangat Pathak explained that this unique approach will offer audiences two distinct experiences within the same thrilling cinematic universe.

According to director Abhishek Pathak, the Malayalam version starring Mohanlal will focus on an emotional family drama, releasing on May 21. Meanwhile, the Hindi version starring Ajay Devgn will shape up as an intense drama-thriller, scheduled for release on October 2.

Both scripts were developed separately to suit their respective audiences, though the creators reviewed and praised each other's work.

A major up- date for the Hindi film is the entry of talented actor Jaideep Ahlawat, who joins the cast following the departure of Akshaye Khanna. Jaideep will play a fresh character, and his intense face-off with Ajay Devgn's iconic character, Vijay Salgaonkar, is expected to be a massive highlight of the movie. Producer Kumar Mangat Pathak assured fans that the early release of the Malayalam film would not spoil the suspense for the Hindi audience.

Beyond this franchise, the father-son duo is expanding their footprints by producing six Malayalam movies this year. They are also carefully developing scripts for Raid 3 and Shaitaan 2.

The filmmakers emphasized that they avoid rushing sequels just to cash in on popular brand names, ensuring every new story genuinely respects the audience's high expectations.

Scarlett Johansson praises Co-Star Adam Driver

Hollywood superstar Scarlett Johansson has shared immense praise for her co-star Adam Driver as they prepare for the world premiere of their upcoming crime thriller, Paper Tiger, at the Cannes Film Festival. This highly anticipated film marks a major on-screen reunion for the duo, arriving seven years after their acclaimed, award-winning performances in the 2019 divorce drama Marriage Story.

Directed by James Gray, Paper Tiger follows a seemingly stable family in late-1980s New York whose lives are completely disrupted when Irwin Pearl's brother, played by Driver, arrives and drags them into a dangerous conflict involving the Russian mafia.

According to reports, Johansson expressed deep admiration for Driver, calling him an extraordinary actor and a wonderful person, while playfully adding that she would happily make every movie with him.

The actress portrays Hester Pearl, the wife of Irwin, who is played by Miles Teller. Reflecting on the filming process, Johansson also highlighted her warm off-screen connection with Teller. She recalled a sweet gesture where Teller playfully checked in on her character by sending photos of her empty makeup station while she was briefly away on promotional duties for Jurassic.

Looking back at her intense history of working with Driver, Johansson recalled the sheer emotional exhaustion of shooting their iconic, aggressive argument scenes for Marriage Story. She credited Driver's immense acting strength for keeping her grounded during those challenging days, emphasizing how vital strong co-stars are to her creative process.

AAMIR KHAN firmly denies ghost directing rumours

Bollywood superstar Aamir Khan has aggressively shut down long-standing media rumours suggesting that he secretly takes over the director's chair for his movies. Known for his deep involvement in filmmaking, the actor clarified his stance with extreme candour during a recent industry event.

Speaking at the Screen Academy, the actor expressed immense frustration over the constant media speculation.

He made it clear that throughout his successful thirty-eight-year career, he has officially directed only one movie, Taare Zameen Par. Dismissing the ghost-directing claims, he questioned why he would ever hide his own hard work under someone else's name, calling the persistent rumours absolute nonsense.

The actor explained that the sheer variety in his filmography proves his innocence. He pointed out that iconic movies like Lagaan, Rang De Basanti, and 3 Idiots all carry completely different creative energies. According to him, this variety exists because each project was guided by the unique vision of its actual director, rather than his own hands.Reflecting on his journey, the star admitted he learned to choose scripts carefully after being called a "one-film wonder" early in his career. He emphasized that filmmaking is a highly complicated, collaborative team effort, giving full credit to the brilliant writers and technicians behind his hits. He concluded that he simply connects with great stories as an actor, rather than trying to control every single aspect behind the camera.

TARA SUTARIA praises strong female co-stars

Bollywood actress Tara Sutaria has showered immense praise on her female co-stars from her upcoming movie, Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups. Speaking during an interview, the actress expressed great joy about being part of this highly anticipated action project headlined by Kannada superstar Yash.

In the film, Tara portrays a charming yet dangerous character named Rebecca. Reflecting on her professional choices, she explained that she prefers doing selective, meaningful cinema over rushing into multiple projects. This precise mindset naturally drew her toward Toxic, a film directed by acclaimed filmmaker Geetu Mohandas, which features an incredible ensemble female cast including Kiara Advani, Nayanthara, Huma Qureshi, and Rukmini Vasanth.

Tara warmly described all her female co-stars as absolutely fascinating, fabulous, and fearless. She noted that it is incredibly rare and beautiful to see women from different stages of life and career come together to celebrate each other on a movie set. She thoroughly enjoyed watching the collective energy during their shared scenes.Furthermore, Tara had wonderful words for Yash, calling him an incredible human being, and highlighted that working under a female director like Geetu created an honest, respectful, and comfortable environment for everyone.

GRITTY 'DC' TRAILER SPARKS ENTHUSIASTIC FAN REACTIONS

The highly anticipated trailer for director Arun Matheswaran's upcoming movie DC was launched grandly at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival. The film marks the exciting acting debut of popular filmmaker Lokesh Kanagaraj in a leading role, starring alongside the talented Wamiqa Gabbi.

The intense three-minute trailer introduces Lokesh as Devadas and Wamiqa as Chandra, showcasing a gritty narrative packed with emotional trauma, massive bomb blasts, gunfights, and heavy bloodshed. Following its international release, acclaimed director Pa Ranjith took to social media to praise the team. Ranjith highly commended Matheswaran's unique filmmaking style, noting that the striking visuals and powerful sound design create a strong mood. He specifically lauded Lokesh's intense screen presence and stated that Wamiqa did a lovely job.

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